





# Sunday shopping laws in disarray as traders plan big open day

By RAY CLANCY

THOUSANDS of shops are expected to open tomorrow in defiance of Sunday trading laws and attempts by local authorities to stop them. Council enforcement officers will, however, be gathering evidence of illegal trading across the country and have said they will prosecute offenders.

BHS, the high street chain store, plans to open 100 of its 138 stores. The company placed full-page advertisements in national newspapers listing branches that will open and offering free fruit punch for late Christmas shoppers.

Woolworth, which along with

BHS and other stores, gave an undertaking to various councils in the High Court earlier this week not to open this Sunday, said it was reviewing the situation in areas where the ban does not apply.

Dixons, the electrical equipment chain, also advertised that selected stores would be open, and said it hoped to open more stores than last Sunday.

Other stores such as John Lewis, House of Fraser, Selfridges in London, Marks & Spencer and C&A are firmly opposed to Sunday trading and will not be opening. The Oxford Street Association, which represents stores in London's busiest

shopping area, said its policy is against Sunday opening but it admitted that some of its members would be trading.

Thousands of small retailers are expected to open for business on Sunday. Some said Christmas shoppers are spending less money this year and every available hour of trading was needed.

Many councils have sent warning letters to stores which have opened on Sundays and four injunctions were obtained in the High Court on Thursday preventing shops from opening their doors. In Birmingham some large stores have said they will not open in spite of a newspaper poll that showed 68 per cent of

shoppers in the city were in favour of Sunday opening. Of the 400 questioned for *The Birmingham Post* survey, 72 per cent said the city council should not prosecute offenders.

In Chester shopkeepers from the chamber of trade, who have voted to stay shut on Sunday, are planning to test the law by stealing from shops which open to establish whether it is illegal to take something from a store which is itself breaking the law by trading. Police said the scheme was ill-advised.

In Manchester, the Arndale centre will stay shut tomorrow, but BHS, H Samuel the jewellers and Currys the electrical equipment store said they planned to open. Blackpool council said it would apply for injunctions to prevent stores opening if they insisted on trading on Sundays and it has sought written undertakings from those who opened last week not to do so again.

Some councils believe individual directors should be held responsible for breaching the shops act. Leeds council said action would be taken against traders who "flagrantly advertised" their intention to break the law and it intended to hold individuals responsible.

Meanwhile the two sides involved in the Sunday trading debate could meet in the new year to discuss a compromise which would lead to a change in the law. The Keep Sunday Special Campaign has written to the prime minister urging him to make a public statement to encourage councils and retailers to uphold the law. Michael Schluter, the campaign director, said: "We are ready and willing for talks with the government for as long as it takes to produce a solution which is in the best long term interests of everybody."

The rival Shopping Hours Reform Council plans to contact the Home Office to try to get the two sides together. Andrew Curry, head of research, said: "The first step is that people talk

to each other. We need an opportunity to get away from the name-calling and get down to business."

The Consumers' Association also called for firm action from the government. Derek Prentice, head of campaigning, said: "Ministers should resist the temptation to try and tidy up an unworkable piece of legislation and local authorities should stop wasting scarce resources on unpopular prosecutions. Everyone agrees that the present law is a mess. It should be scrapped."

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## Drink-drive warnings are being heeded, police say

By NICHOLAS WATT

THE government's Christmas warnings not to drink and drive are being heeded and fewer people have been breathalysed positively in the last few weeks than in the same period last year, police forces said yesterday.

Supt Bill McDavid, head of the traffic department at Dumfries and Galloway police, said that while more people were found to be over the limit, there had been a decrease in real terms because the force had been testing more motorists. In the first three weeks of its campaign this year there was a 41 per cent increase in the number of drivers tested positively compared with last year, but the force had increased its tests by 80 per cent.

Mr McDavid said that the increased number of tests was partly due to the growing success of the force's drink-driver disclosure scheme which was launched in 1988. Dumfries and Galloway is the only Scottish force to run such a scheme whereby if somebody suspects another of drinking and driving they can telephone the police anonymously.

The force has increased its patrols and tests drivers first thing in the morning, when they might still have alcohol in their blood from the previous night, after lunchtime parties, and in the evening. Anyone involved in an accident has to take a breath test.

In Wiltshire, police have been breathalysing everyone involved in accidents and all drivers who commit moving traffic offences, such as speeding, passing through a red light or driving without lights. The force said that it wanted to create a deterrent as people were more careful about drinking and driving if they knew that there was a good chance of being caught. The force was paying more attention to drivers in the morning who were often startled to be tested positively at that time and did not know that the body lost only one unit of alcohol per hour after drinking.

There has been an appreciable reduction in real terms in the number of people that have failed the breath test in Wiltshire this year compared with last year. Sergeant Hunt, the force's accident prevention officer, said: "Twenty people failed the test last year in the first five days of the campaign, and 32 failed in the same period this year. However, with the increased number of breath tests these figures were 8.5 per cent last year and 6.3 per cent this year. He said the decline was due to people becoming more concerned about the anti-social nature of drink-driving.

The West Midlands force has also been breathalysing all drivers involved in accidents and those who commit moving traffic offences. In the first two days of the test period up to yesterday morning 39 drivers had failed the test, compared with 29 in the same period last year. There have, however, been twice as many tests this year. Warwickshire police

has also been breathalysing all drivers in accidents but it has left it up to individual officers to decide whether to test drivers committing moving traffic offences.

In contrast, North Wales police says that it has not been running a Christmas campaign against drink-driving as it has been vigilant all year. The force would, however, be collecting figures from December 19 to January 2 in line with Association of Chief Police Officers guidelines.

The Metropolitan Police has been increasing the activities of its regular patrols. The force said that it breathalysed everyone involved in accidents, but when drivers broke traffic regulations officers would test them for alcohol only if they suspected that the driver had been drinking.

It was too early to compare this year with last year but the force said that of 5,496 tests made 423 drivers had failed or refused to take the test.

## Beware dangers in low-alcohol myths

ANYONE contemplating drinking and driving this Christmas should watch out for the myths about the amount of alcohol in drinks and about how much their body can withstand (Nicholas Watt writes).

Some beers marketed for their low levels of alcohol contain above average volumes, according to Dr John Rae, former headmaster of Westminster School and director of the Portman Group, which promotes sensible drinking.

He said that Miller Lite had a volume of 4.1 per cent which was more than four times as much as the Carillon low-alcohol brand. Miller Lite's volume was also a percentage point above the average beer strength of 3 per cent.

However, Dr Rae did not accept Tesco's new policy of

printing the amount of alcohol units per glass on its own brands of drinks. He said there was a great deal of ignorance about units and he called on the drinks industry, which funds the Portman Group, to mark the levels of alcohol in grammes on bottles and cans.

However, Simon Sandberg, alcohol research officer for the Health Education Authority, welcomed the Tesco initiative as a model for other stores. An average lager, such as Heineken, contained 1.5 units in a 440ml can while the same-size Carlsberg Special had four units.

A recent survey for the authority found that while most people knew about alcohol units few had any idea of how many units were contained in particular drinks.

However, drinkers can gain solace from an analytical chemist specialising in drink driving who has disputed claims that low-alcohol drinks can take drivers over the limit. Ronald Denney, of London's Thames Polytechnic, said that people drinking low alcohol beers at normal rates would produce virtually no build-up of blood alcohol.

"It is not possible for a person to exceed the legal limit from drinking low-alcohol beers alone. Even after a full strength alcoholic drink, the increase in blood alcohol will be so insignificant as to be irrelevant," he said. The health department said last night it had never heard of such findings.



Rae: "Great ignorance about alcohol units"

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Postmaster Sir Bryan Nicholson, chairman of the Post Office, surrounded yesterday by the mass of Christmas mail still to be delivered. He said that a record number had been sent this year despite signs of recession (William Cash writes).

"Posting Christmas cards seems to be the one area the public has not cut back on. By Christmas Eve we will have handled 1.5 billion items of festive mail in 24 days, beating last year's record by 40 million items," he said during a visit to the Mount Pleasant sorting office in central London.

The avalanche of cards reached a record peak on Monday, when 119 million cards were posted. That is more than double the number handled on a normal day and beats last year's record of 115 million. The mail has been swollen by expensive cards in place of presents and by the demand for electricity shares.

He said that the Christmas operation this year had run smoothly, and praised postmen and women who had worked through the worst weather for ten years. The cascade of mail included a new record-sized sack of 750,000 cards addressed to Santa Claus in Reindeerland, better known as a Royal Mail office in Edinburgh.

One letter this year has started a national appeal. A small girl, Gemma, sent Santa a present of a hallmarked silver ring in a unbranded standard envelope, with no home address, marked: "Father Christmas, North Pole, or wherever you are."

Sir Bryan has had the ring valued, and yesterday launched an appeal to find Gemma. "We are concerned that the gift may be someone's treasured wedding ring - we are appealing for anyone who may know Gemma to come forward." Anyone who thinks they do is asked to call 031-556 8661 with her surname.

## Suicide fears speed up removal of young prisoners from jail

By QUENTIN COWDRY, HOME AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

THE government has speeded up plans to remove young unconvicted prisoners from the adult jails of Hull and Armley, Leeds, where eight inmates aged under 21 have committed suicide since 1980, it was disclosed yesterday.

Under its original scheme, which involved the conversion of Thorp Arch prison near Wetherby, West Yorkshire, into a young offenders' institution, Hull and Armley would continue to have held young remand inmates for the next two years.

Faced by fierce new criticism of jail conditions, the Home Office has now decided to use the newly-built Moorland jail in Doncaster, South Yorkshire, as the main holding centre for young people remanded by courts in Yorkshire and Humberside. The Home Office said yesterday that it hoped Moorland would begin taking prisoners in August.

Part of the explanation for the changed plan is the scathing criticism Armley jail received last month in a report by the Prisons Inspectorate. It urged the Home Office to bar young people from

being remanded to the overcrowded Victorian jail, and said the regime for prisoners aged under 21 was wholly unacceptable.

As the inmates were locked up in cells for more than 20 hours a day it was easy to see how some became dangerously disturbed, the report said. Inspectors have been equally critical of the regime for young offenders at Hull jail.

The National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders warmly welcomed the move, saying the conditions in which young people were held at Hull and Armley were a disgrace to a "supposedly civilised country".

Paul Cavadin, the association's senior press officer, said: "For years, teenagers at both prisons have been confined for long hours every day in overcrowded, insanitary cells with very restricted regimes." The association, however, believes the Home Office should not be deflected from attempting to increase the proportion of young defendants who receive bail.

## IRA gang is found guilty of bomb plot

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN BELFAST

FOUR members of the IRA were convicted in Belfast yesterday of conspiring to murder soldiers with a radio-controlled culvert bomb two years ago.

Michael Magee, aged 26, of Antrim, Henry McNally, aged 46, and John O'Hagan, aged 37, of Dungannon, and Peter Bateson, aged 35, of Magherafelt, were found guilty of possessing a 93lb Semtex bomb and of conspiracy to murder. They will be sentenced next month.

The bomb was found in the culvert of a road leading on to an estate in Antrim where soldiers and their families live in defence ministry married quarters. The court was told that it was intended the bomb should be detonated by a radio command on a day when a bus carrying soldiers was to use the road. Lord Justice Murray said that had that occurred, there was no doubt that all those aboard would have been killed or seriously injured. He was satisfied that the four were participating members of the bombing team.

In Co Fermanagh meanwhile a milk float thought to contain a bomb continued to block a permanent cross-border vehicle checkpoint at Kilturk yesterday. The vehicle was left there on Thursday morning by a milkman whose helper had been abducted by

armed and masked men and was being held hostage while the milkman drove the vehicle, with a suspect package aboard, to the checkpoint in the latest "human bomb" attack. British and Irish security forces had the area around Kilturk sealed off on both sides of the border last night while an army bomb disposal team stood by.

Belgian judges yesterday turned down an attempt to free on a legal technicality three suspected terrorists arrested earlier this month. Defence lawyers now plan to go to the Belgian supreme court in Brussels (Stewart Tindler writes).

Gerry Roche, aged 41, Ciaran McCarthy, aged 30, and John Daly, aged 26, are charged with criminal association and the illegal possession of weapons. They were arrested in a flat in Antwerp with guns and ammunition and are being held on remand for 30 days.

Appeal court judges, meeting in Antwerp jail where the three are held in solitary confinement, accepted that there were delays in allowing the men to see documents in the case but decided that the matter was being rectified and there was no need to release them. Paul Quirynen, the men's lawyer, said that he would now appeal to the Supreme Court in Brussels.

## BBC asked to explain man of year decision

By JAMIE DETTMER AND CHRISTOPHER THOMAS

THE BBC came under pressure yesterday from politicians and British Hindus to explain its fully its reasons for depriving the Indian political leader Lal Krishna Advani of the Radio 4 Man of the Year award.

While some Indian community leaders in Britain accused the BBC of racial discrimination, hardline Hindus in Delhi said they would be deeply upset if Mr Advani were denied the accolade.

Mr Advani, leader of the chauvinist Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party, yesterday rejected the suggestion that his British supporters could have orchestrated listeners' votes in this year's competition, the reason the BBC gave for denying him the award. He said he had no idea what had happened. "If this vote was orchestrated, then by whom?" he asked.

As *The Times* disclosed yesterday, Mr Advani received the majority of votes from listeners in this year's competition, which was organised by the *Today* current affairs programme.

Senior editors on the programme took the decision to discount all the votes for Mr Advani after they began to suspect that they were the result of an orchestrated campaign. A significant number of votes had been enclosed in envelopes of the same type and make and posted in Bradford and Birmingham.

A BBC spokeswoman yesterday said that she was dismayed at the reaction to the editors' decision. "The competition is just supposed to be a bit of end-of-year fun for our listeners. An orchestrated voting campaign is not in that spirit."

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## Welsh Ford plant's award

The Ford motor company has decided to make its top award for excellence and quality to one of its British plants which, according to union officials, was "punished" earlier this year by the cancellation of a £225 million investment plan which would have made Britain its key European production centre (Tim Jones writes).

Instead of putting the money into its plant at Bridgend, South Wales, the company decided to divert the investment to Germany. The move, announced in April, was acknowledged to be a rap over the knuckles for strikes earlier in the year which cost the company £10 million a day.

Bridgend is the first of the company's four engine plants in Europe to be selected to receive the award.

## QC for enquiry

Hugh Carlisle, QC, was yesterday appointed to investigate whether West Midlands police deliberately suppressed an internal report on the accidental fatal shooting by police of 16-year-old Gail Kinchin ten years ago. Mr Justice Hodgson called for the enquiry at the High Court in Birmingham three weeks ago when he said it was deplorable that the report into the shooting during a siege had remained secret since 1980.

## Inmates go home

Almost a quarter of Northern Ireland's prison population left prison yesterday for one week's Christmas leave. Among the 430 long-term prisoners going home were 144 serving life sentences. Christmas leave dates from before the outbreak of the present troubles just over 20 years ago and was a pioneering scheme in the British penal system. Those on leave include members of the loyalist murder gang of the 1970s known as the Shankhill butchers.

## Taylor challenge

Tory rebels yesterday claimed to have raised 50 signatures needed to challenge the adoption of the black barrister John Taylor as Cheltenham's prospective parliamentary candidate. Under party rules the names of 50 members are required to convene a special general meeting. The rebels' leader, Bob Williams, said: "We are not objecting to a black candidate being selected but we feel that we were railroaded into accepting him."

## Office partygoers left to pick up the bill

By LIN JENKINS

THE compliments of the season are visibly less lavish this year as far as employers' largesse to staff is concerned.

Where once the office Christmas party was on the firm, with partners invited, the trend now is for guests to pay the full cost, or part of it, or for companies to reduce costs by leaving out spouses. Bonuses or presents of hampers, wine or a turkey have become rare as available funds go on seasonal goodwill to the customer rather than to the staff.

The blame is put variously on the economic climate, interest rates, the taxman, or a widely held belief that such extravagance might appear indulgent in times of relative economic hardship.

However, the Industrial Relations Services, which has monitored changes in employers' generosity to employees in the season of goodwill, put some of it down to a change in business philosophy. Christmas gratuities

have given way to productivity bonuses. Another reason for the decline of the traditional junket on the company is the growth of the "nanny approach", with employers expressing worries about over-indulgence and in particular drinking and driving.

Staff at the London headquarters of Unilever receive no gifts and celebrations are subsidised department by department, with the staff paying the balance. A spokesman described them as modest affairs but said that the pattern had been established for some years.

London Underground has a similar policy. A spokesman said: "We are in straitened circumstances with our overspend, so cannot afford it. It's a question of people chipping in rather than being treated, but I should hasten to add we still have a good time."

British Telecom subsidises the Christmas lunch in the office restaurant, but departmental parties are organised and paid for by those among the 240,000 employ-

ees who wish to join in. The Inland Revenue's revision last year of allowances for parties raised the sum a company could spend on the employee - without it being taxed as a benefit - from £30 to £50.

If that limit is exceeded, the full cost is regarded as the employee's taxable income, which is why some companies charge a certain price for tickets if they wish to spend more, thereby saving their staff from the tax.

Gifts of hampers and other seasonal fare are also taxable for people earning more than £2,500 a year, and store vouchers are treated in the same way as cash by the taxman, regardless of annual income.

Graham Ward-Thompson, a tax partner with Coopers Deloitte, said: "There are always calls to increase the amount that an employer may spend on his employees without the staff having to pay tax on it, but it is a concession by the Inland Revenue. One problem is the regional

element. You can have a very good bash here in Sheffield for £50 a head, but the same is probably not true in London."

In the City, where annual parties have been reputed to be lavish in the past, there appears to be some restraint this year. At BZW each department is given a limit on what it may spend, with staff paying for any extra cost.

As if the question of cost was not enough to dampen the festive spirit, consumer watchdogs have given a warning that the alcohol in many Christmas puddings could be enough to push a careful drinker over the drink-drive limit. Glamorgan's consumer protection department, which had been checking the labelling of puddings, found substantial amounts of alcohol in some. John Richmond, the department's head, said: "It would be quite possible to consume a considerable amount of alcohol without even realising."

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## Journalist hails verdict in Sutcliffe's 'one court action too many'

## Ripper's wife loses libel case and faces costs of £300,000

By ROBIN YOUNG

SONIA Sutcliffe, wife of the Yorkshire Ripper, yesterday lost her claim for libel damages against the *News of the World* and it probably all the money she got in a series of breach of copyright and libel actions brought against newspapers and magazines in recent years.

The costs awarded against Mrs Sutcliffe in the 15-day hearing which ended yesterday with a unanimous verdict against her are expected to total £300,000. Mrs Sutcliffe had previously won a total of £334,000 damages, but during the trial her solicitor, Eileen Pembroke, told the court that only about £230,000 remained after meeting previous legal costs.

George Carman, QC, for the *News of the World*, sought and obtained from Mr Justice Drake an order that £150,000 of the money should not be moved from accounts with the Newcastle Building Society and the National Westminster Bank without seven days' notice to the paper's solicitors. Mr Carman said the newspaper was concerned lest the money should be dissipated or moved abroad.

During the trial Mr Carman had claimed that Mrs Sutcliffe had committed perjury during her previous libel action against the magazine *Private Eye*, in which she was initially awarded £600,000 damages last year, later reduced to £60,000 by the Court of Appeal.

Paul Halloran, a spokesman for *Private Eye*, said last night that the magazine now intended to pursue the "criminal aspects" of the case with the Director of Public Prosecutions and would con-



Miss Jones: "Mrs Sutcliffe has been totally defeated"

sider a civil action against Mrs Sutcliffe trying to recover costs.

Mrs Sutcliffe, a former school teacher, showed no emotion as the jury of nine women and three men returned its verdict. She had brought the action over a front-page report headlined: "Sonia loves a Ripper double". The article claimed that Mrs Sutcliffe had a "passionate affair" and "silly fling" with George Papoutsis, a Greek company director.

Mr Papoutsis was described as "the spitting image" of Mrs Sutcliffe's husband, Peter, who was convicted of the murders of 13 women and sentenced to life imprisonment in 1981. The article quoted Mr Papoutsis as saying: "I feel sick. I've been kissing and caressing the wife of a monster."

Mrs Sutcliffe had claimed that the article libelled her by alleging that she deceived Mr Papoutsis by not telling him who her husband was, and by suggesting that she stole money by leaving him to pay two hotel bills in Greece on her behalf. The jury was out for six hours before returning

the verdict. Mrs Sutcliffe, who had been rocking tensely in her seat while waiting for the jurors to return, stared straight ahead as the verdict was delivered. Beside her, her mother, Maria Szuma, who had given evidence in the trial, looked grim.

Representatives of the *News of the World* on the other side of the court room were elated and smiling. They had bought Mrs Sutcliffe a one-way train ticket to Bradford, the value of which, Mr Carman had suggested to the jury, was the highest amount of damages she might deserve. In the event none of them was able to reach Mrs Sutcliffe before she left the court room and strode down a corridor to a private consulting room.

Mrs Sutcliffe later emerged with her solicitor, walking quickly and dismissing reporters' attempts to question her with a flick of her hand.

Tom Crone, the *News of the World's* legal manager, said afterwards: "The jury's verdict is a great victory, not only for the *News of the World* but also for fairness and common sense." He said that the paper had paid £50,000 into court in offer of settlement of Mrs Sutcliffe's complaint. He described her refusal to accept that sum as plain greed.

Barbara Jones, chief reporter of *The Mail on Sunday*, who had been named as a third party in the action by the *News of the World*, smiled with relief and shook the hand of a friend sitting next to her on the front bench immediately beneath the jury box.

Mrs Sutcliffe had been in the witness box for six days during the trial. She had denied having an affair with Mr Papoutsis during a trip she made to Greece in May 1988 in company with Miss Jones.

The jury had heard that the *News of the World* had paid an agency called Rex Features £25,000 for its report of the holiday romance and an interview with Mr Papoutsis; £23,500 was paid by Rex Features to Barbara Jones, who said that she paid £10,000 to Mr Papoutsis and took the rest on behalf of a freelance photographer, Ian Parry, since killed in an air crash.

Barbara Jones, who represented herself in the trial, said of Mrs Sutcliffe afterwards: "She has been totally defeated. I think this was just one libel action too many for her."

During the trial, Mr Carman claimed Mrs Sutcliffe had committed perjury during the trial and in her 1989 libel action against *Private Eye*. He described as "perjury loud and clear" an answer in the *Private Eye* trial in which Mrs



Mrs Sutcliffe, who told the trial she was "an emotional cripple" and denied having felt any romantic attraction for George Papoutsis, a Greek company director

Sutcliffe had said that an agreement for the loan of money she needed to save her family house was not recorded in writing but only by word of mouth.

Mrs Sutcliffe had claimed that the money was a personal loan from a friend whom she refused to name. In fact the money had been advanced by Miss Jones, who said that it was payment for Mrs Sutcliffe's co-operation in writing a book.

Receipts for £15,000 and £10,000 signed by Mrs Szuma and Mrs Sutcliffe respectively had been produced by Miss Jones. Mr Carman said they only came to light by "pure chance" because the *News of the World* had joined Miss Jones as a party to the action after discovering that she had been paid by Rex Features.

Mrs Sutcliffe claimed during the *News of the World* trial that she never knew of the receipt signed by her mother

until after the *Private Eye* hearing had finished, and said she regarded the receipt she signed herself as "a piece of nonsense" to satisfy Miss Jones's bank manager.

On Mrs Sutcliffe's behalf her counsel, Geoffrey Shaw, argued that a written receipt was not the same as a recorded agreement. He described Mrs Sutcliffe's reply in the *Private Eye* trial as "truthful, not frank", and claimed that Mrs Sutcliffe had only been seeking to protect Miss Jones.

Mrs Sutcliffe, describing herself as "an emotional cripple" denied having felt any

romantic attraction for Mr Papoutsis. She said she had been "mortified" to read the article and concerned that it would upset her husband, whom she still visits in Broadmoor.

Mr Papoutsis did not appear in court during the trial, though he too had been cited by the *News of the World* as a third party in the action. In a written statement read to the court he claimed he and Mrs Sutcliffe had been immediately attracted to each other, and had enjoyed "an obviously intimate relationship".

## Dorset heath ruling dismays conservationists

By MICHAEL MCCARTHY, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE weakness of the legal protection for Britain's most valuable wildlife sites was exposed yesterday when a challenge in the High Court failed to stop building development on a Dorset heathland that is home to some of the country's rarest animals and birds.

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the British Herpetological Society failed to block Poole borough council's plan to build up to 200 houses on Canford Heath. The land is home to sand lizards and smooth snakes, Britain's rarest reptiles, and to nightjars and Dartford warblers, which are among Britain's rarest breeding birds.

The heath is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) by the Nature Conservancy Council under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. However, as yesterday's decision made clear, although SSSI designation is meant to be the principal legal tool for protecting important habitats, it is overridden by the planning process, and will not prevent development if a planning authority gives permission, no matter how important the land is to local wildlife.

Mr Justice Schiemann, declining to quash the planning permission granted by Poole council, said that the council had grappled with the rival demands of conservation issues and the pressing need for housing in the area, and the balance it had struck was lawful. A council spokesman said afterwards: "The decision means we can press ahead with plans to build the houses."

Environmental groups saw the ruling as a dismal precedent and symbolic of the struggle between development and conservation in southern England. The Poole-Bournemouth area is one of the fastest-growing conurbations in Europe, and the lowland heath, with its rare flora and fauna, is one of the most fragile and endangered habitats in the country. The Dorset heathland has shrunk dramatically, and in the last 200 years more than 80 per cent of the original area has been lost; there are now just over 809 acres left, compared with 1052 in 1978.

Yesterday the WWF and the Royal Society for Nature Conservation called for changes in the law to give wildlife sites real protection, while the conservancy council said it would suggest addi-

tional protective measures in the planning bill that has been laid before parliament.

Chris Tydeman, senior conservation officer for the WWF, said of yesterday's decision: "This was an important test case which has established, regrettably, that the law is totally inadequate to protect important wildlife sites and to meet Britain's international conservation obligations. It's little short of a builders' charter. Other Sites of Special Scientific Interest will be in jeopardy because local authorities are bound to feel less constrained about building on them."

## THE SUNDAY TIMES

## The best possible taste?

"The group photo call did not disappoint. As the host of the Most Elegant People awards called Latoya Jackson to perch on his knee in the foreground, frost began to form over the magnificent shoulders of Gina Lollobrigida at this blatant upstaging. With consummate skill, she seized a Jackson forearm and leaned forward to engage her in mock conversation. Nothing personal, her smile said. It was just business."

Susan Wavell, at a stylish Paris event, in *The Sunday Times* tomorrow.

## All fall down

"If it's a funny old world for Mrs Thatcher, it's been a funny old year for the rest of us. Spectacular falls went hand in hand with fantastic folly."

In a special issue tomorrow, the *Magazine* looks at the year's losers and those who made us smile.

## The earlier awards

MRS Sutcliffe has obtained £334,000 damages from the press in actions for libel and breach of copyright; the court had been told. The money had averaged £50,000 a year tax-free, "far in excess of the average industrial wage let alone what a Bradford school-teacher is paid", Mr Carman said. The awards were: £5,000 from the *Bradford Telegraph and Argus* in June 1983; £25,000 from the *Yorkshire Post* in November 1988; another £7,500 from the same paper the following May; £100,000 and £60,000 from *Private Eye* in October 1989; £35,000 from the *Daily Star* in November and

December 1989; £75,000 from the *Daily Express* in the same month; and £26,500 from *News Group Newspapers* in September this year.

The £60,000 from *Private Eye* was reached by agreement after the magazine's appeal against a jury's award of £600,000. All the other sums had been agreed in settlement of actions without proceeding to trial.

Sonia Sutcliffe told the court that the only amount she had taken from the accounts into which the damages were paid was to buy a domestic burglar alarm before coming to London for the trial.

## Academics remember Oakeshott

POLITICIANS and academics yesterday paid tribute to Michael Oakeshott, the leading conservative philosopher of the century, who died on Tuesday, a week after his 89th birthday (John O'Leary writes).

Although he shunned party politics, his writings over more than 40 years formed the philosophical basis for much of the "new conservatism". Academics of all political persuasions acknowledge his greatness.

Professor Kenneth Minogue, an Oakeshott appointee at the London School of Economics, said: "He was undoubtedly the most intellectual conservative philosopher who has ever existed, and much the most philosophical exponent of conservatism since Burke."

Throughout a career that also took in Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, and Nuffield College, Oxford, he insisted that he owed allegiance to no party and had no message to convey. He was, however, a strong advocate of personal responsibility and freedom.

Lord Beloff said: "He has been very influential, in a sense an unrecognised influence. It was not the same contribution as Hayek, for example, because he was not so concerned with what should be done, more with the way people behave. There is no Oakeshottian doctrine but an Oakeshottian way of doing things."

"Many people think it quite extraordinary that he received no public recognition for his tremendous contribution to intellectual life."

While his health had weakened of late, his last book, *The Voice of Liberal Learning*, was published only last year.

Leading article, page 9  
Obituary, page 10

## Boy is awarded £1.198m over hospital blunder

A BOY of eight who suffered severe brain damage at birth because of a hospital blunder won record damages of £1,198,110 in the High Court in London yesterday.

Hugo Cassel, of Kirby Underdale, Humberside, suffered the brain damage as a result of lack of oxygen at birth at the West London hospital, in September 1982. He was born by forceps delivery and no heart beat was detected for more than a minute. Twelve hours later he suffered a convulsion.

The court had been told that Hugo, who had his name down for Eton and was destined for a successful life, will always be locked in the world of a child and will be totally dependent on others.

Mr Justice Rose said most

of the burden of caring for Hugo had fallen on his parents, Jeremy Cassel and his wife Vivien.

The boy's "marvellously devoted" mother had been "totally unstinting in her time



Mr Justice Rose: heavy burden on boy's parents

## First claim settled in Marchioness tragedy

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN PARIS

THE first settlement of a claim arising out of the Marchioness disaster on the Thames in August 1989 was reported to have been reached yesterday with payment of damages to the mother of a French chef who died while working on the boat, judicial sources said.

Philip Jenkinson, a British barrister practising in France, and Graham Platt, an English solicitor also based here, said that the claim was by Renée Hallez, the mother of the 39-year-old chef from Lille. They had "successfully negotiated terms to conclude his bereaved mother's claim for damages".

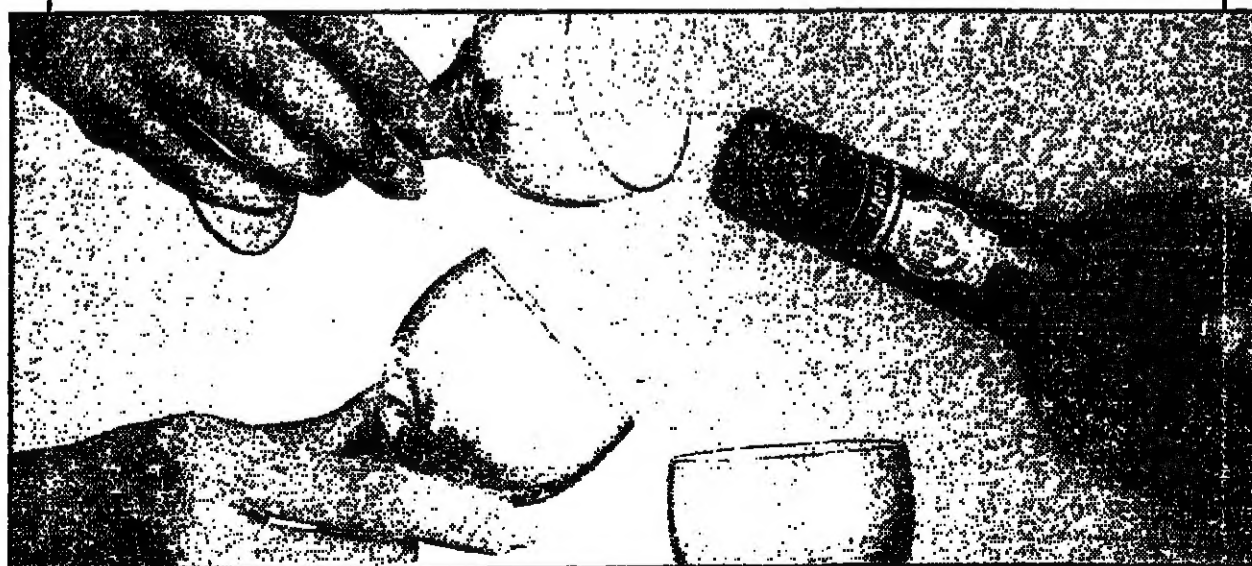
Mr Jenkinson added: "I know that this settlement will give hope to the other families at this particular time of year." The amount of

compensation agreed following discussions with solicitors acting for owners of the *Bowbelle*, which collided with the *Marchioness*, was not disclosed, but it was described by Mr Jenkinson as "satisfactory to a large degree" to Mme Hallez.

Patrick Allen, speaking on behalf of the steering committee of solicitors representing the London-based families of victims, said yesterday that he expected more claims to be settled in the new year. "I was not aware that a claim had been settled but the majority of cases have been thoroughly documented and claims have been presented to the defendants," he said. "I know that offers have been made and it is now up to the individual solicitors and their clients whether they wish to accept."

Men used to ask the ladies to leave when Croft Port appeared.

Today they wouldn't have the bottle.



In a less emancipated age, the end of dinner was reserved for "man's talk". As was Croft Port. Today, however, when the Late Bottled Vintage or our 10 and 20 Year Old Tawnies come out, the ladies stay put. And the gentlemen find that when it comes to Croft Port, liberation can be a struggle.





# Ending of student architect grants illegal, court rules

By JOHN O'LEARY, HIGHER EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

A GOVERNMENT decision to withdraw grants from student architects in the last two years of their course was declared illegal yesterday in the High Court. Costs were awarded against the education department.

Last August, John MacGregor, then education secretary, withdrew grants from students on the second part of university, polytechnic and college courses in architecture on legal advice. Although the grants had been paid since 1962, the department's lawyers considered that the award of a bachelor's degree after three years put subsequent study outside mandatory awards regulations.

Mr MacGregor told the Royal Institute of British Architects, which brought the action, that there was no legal means open to him to retain grants for the final two years required for full qualification. A civil servant added: "We are dealing here not with discretion but with the inevitable consequences of a legal defect."

A bursary scheme was announced in October to compensate the students affected, but some have still not received any money. They are also barred from applications for student loans, which are available only for courses attracting mandatory grants.

After a two-day hearing, Mr Justice Schiemann ruled that the withdrawal of the grants

had been unlawful because the full five-year course constituted a first degree. Mr MacGregor had misconstrued what parliament had intended in framing the awards regulations.

The judge said: "The secretary of state carried out his evaluation, if indeed he did ever carry out an evaluation, under a mistaken view of the law." The interpretation used for 28 years, that the two parts of a course in architecture counted as a first degree, had been the correct one.

He said that his decision was "at first blush slightly surprising", and he was making no comment on whether the courses should continue to attract grants. It is open to Kenneth Clarke, as education secretary, to decide which courses should be designated.

For administrative convenience, he agreed to the



Mr Justice Schiemann: "surprising decision"

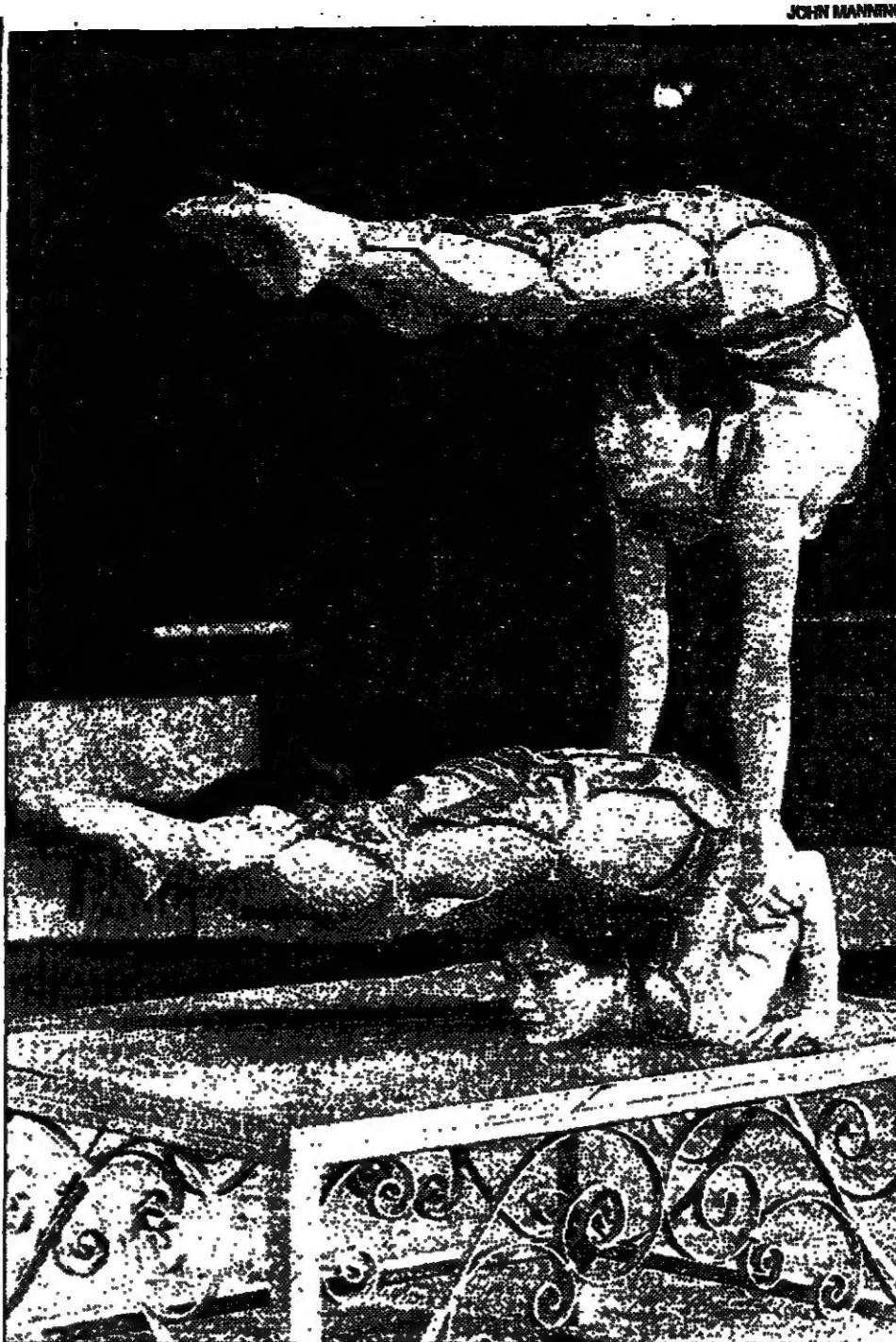
department's request not to quash the order but simply to declare it unlawful. A spokesman for the department said later that ministers would study the judgment before deciding what action to take.

Bill Rodgers, director general of RIBA, said: "This has been a famous victory. I am sure the secretary of state has to accept it and restore the grants as quickly as possible."

Maxwell Hutchinson, the institute's president, said: "This judgment exposes government's proposals for changes in architectural education as the shoddy cost-cutting exercises they are." The education department is conducting a review of courses in architecture with a view to reducing public funding to four years.

In his judgment, Mr Justice Schiemann compared courses in architecture to medical degrees at Oxford and Cambridge, both of which also carry intermediate qualifications. The departmental review has been seen as a potential test for a later assault on other professional courses of more than four years.

The department has insisted that there was no connection between the withdrawal of students' grants and the wider review. Ministers, however, are likely to wait until they have made a decision on the length of courses before committing themselves to the future structure of student support.



Over the top: the Mongolian contortionists Janyanguine Erdenshimeg and Baltayva Ekhitsceg, loosening up at the Austin Brothers' circus, which starts its Christmas season at Battersea Park hippodrome, southwest London, tonight

## Package holiday firms quell fears of big price rises

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

THE expected increases in the cost of package holidays next summer have failed to materialise, in spite of the continuing high price of aviation fuel.

Britain's two leading tour operators, Thomson and Intasun, yesterday produced their updated brochures for 1991. Both guaranteed a continuation of their no-surcharge policy while holding any increase in the cost of an individual holiday to between 1 and 2 per cent.

Slight price rises being imposed by tour operators are likely, however, to be wiped out by travel agents who are fighting for a larger market share. Some holidays will be on sale in travel agents immediately after Christmas at discounts of about 10 per cent as the price war switches to the high street.

Tour operators had warned holidaymakers to book early to avoid price increases but they are now urging travellers to make bookings as soon as possible after Christmas, saying that some holidays could become scarce.

Roger Heape, managing director of Intasun, said: "Another holiday shortage is a certainty with the number of holidays on sale pegged at the same level as last year. Holidaymakers who leave booking too late will either completely miss out or have to pay higher prices."

Any increases that have been made, mainly on holidays to parts of Spain and Greece, have been caused by price rises being passed on at source, such as a sharp jump in the cost of petrol needed by coach operators who meet tourists at airports. These range from £3 to £7 on a typical £350 holiday to the Mediterranean, a figure that is likely to deter few people from booking.

Many other holidays have

remained at last July's levels, while some have dropped in price because tour operators have renegotiated contracts with hotels. The biggest bargains will be found by shopping around at travel agents, with companies including Thomas Cook and Lunn Poly about to announce massive post-Christmas "sales".

Tour operators are preparing for the traditional post-Christmas rush and millions of pounds are being spent on television and newspaper advertisements. While most tour operators aim to fill at least half their summer holiday bookings by the end of January, the past few years have seen an increase in customers leaving bookings until the last minute.

The trend this year, however, seems to be moving back towards early bookings. Most tour operators are reporting an expanding market, in spite of deepening economic gloom.

Intasun said that winter holiday sales during the past month were 35 per cent higher than at the same time last year while summer bookings were up by 25 per cent. Thomson, which expects to send more than three million people on holiday next year, also reported increased optimism compared with last year.

With the supply of holidays now much nearer the likely demand, following a reduction in numbers after last year's slump, tour operators are again expecting healthy profits.

Thomson says that the biggest increase in bookings has been concentrated in Portugal and Greece, although Spain is making a come-back after two disastrous years. "One of the most significant improvements appears to be in the number of families with children who are booking for next summer," a Thomson spokesman said.

## Chess draw after duel of 10 hours

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

THE 21st game of the world chess championship in Lyons, ended in a draw late on Thursday night after a duel lasting 86 moves and ten hours. Gary Kasparov, the champion, leads by 1½ points to 9½ and needs one draw from the final three games to retain the title.

Anatoly Karpov, the challenger, summoned up final reserves of energy and willpower in game 21 in a desperate attempt to stay in contention for the championship. When the game was adjourned after 40 moves Kasparov's position seemed critical.

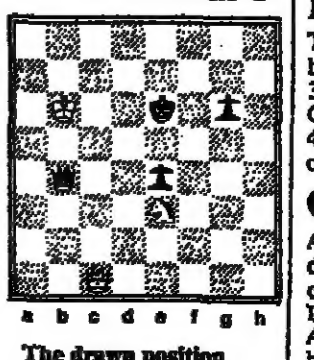
When the game resumed on Thursday night, Karpov came within an ace of victory but was deprived of his goal by a Kasparov defensive strategy. Ultimately Karpov entered an endgame of queen and knight against queen and two pawns, which is regarded in chess theory, quite rightly, as totally drawn.

The 22nd game is scheduled for today unless Karpov decides to take his last remaining time out.

The moves:

Karpov white Kasparov black

White	Black	White	Black
1 d4	Nf6	44 Qxd4	Qxd5
2 c4	g6	45 Qxd5	Qxd5
3 Nc3	Bg7	46 Qd4	Rg1
4 e4	Qf6	47 Nc3	Rg1
5 d5	Q-d7	48 Nc4	Rg1
6 Bc3	Qd7	49 Nc3	Rg1
7 Qd2	Qd5	50 Nc3	Rg1
8 Qd2	Qd5	51 Bc3	Rg1
9 Q-d3	Qd5	52 Kc3	Nd4
10 Bc3	Qd5	53 Bc3	Nd4
11 Qd3	Nc6	54 Nc3	Rg1
12 Nc3	Rd6	55 Kc3	Rg1
13 Bc3	Rd6	56 Kc3	Rg1
14 Nc3	Rd6	57 Nc3	Rg1
15 Kd1	Qf7	58 Kd1	Kd3
16 Nc3	Kd3	59 Kd1	Kd3
17 Qd2	Nf7	60 Kd1	Kd3
18 Qd2	Nf7	61 Qd2	Qf7
19 Bg1	Nc3	62 Kc3	Qf7
20 Nc3	Nc3	63 Kc3	Qf7
21 Nc3	Nc3	64 Kc3	Qf7
22 Nc3	Nc3	65 Kc3	Qf7
23 Nc3	Nc3	66 Kc3	Qf7
24 Nc3	Nc3	67 Kc3	Qf7
25 Nc3	Nc3	68 Kc3	Qf7
26 Nc3	Nc3	69 Kc3	Qf7
27 Nc3	Nc3	70 Kc3	Qf7
28 Nc3	Nc3	71 Kc3	Qf7
29 Nc3	Nc3	72 Kc3	Qf7
30 Nc3	Nc3	73 Kc3	Qf7
31 Nc3	Nc3	74 Kc3	Qf7
32 Nc3	Nc3	75 Kc3	Qf7
33 Nc3	Nc3	76 Kc3	Qf7
34 Nc3	Nc3	77 Kc3	Qf7
35 Nc3	Nc3	78 Kc3	Qf7
36 Nc3	Nc3	79 Kc3	Qf7
37 Nc3	Nc3	80 Kc3	Qf7
38 Nc3	Nc3	81 Kc3	Qf7
39 Nc3	Nc3	82 Kc3	Qf7
40 Nc3	Nc3	83 Kc3	Qf7
41 Nc3	Nc3	84 Kc3	Qf7
42 Nc3	Nc3	85 Kc3	Qf7
43 Nc3	Nc3	86 Kc3	Qf7



The drawn position

## Memorial for Welsh miners

A statue of a miner, his wife and child is to be erected on the site of a former colliery in the Rhondda as a memorial to the mining communities there. A £3,000 grant for the memorial was announced yesterday, the day after the closure of the last pit in the valley (John Young writes).

The grant is one of ten awards in this year's community prize competition organized by the Civic Trust and sponsored by British Telecom. Other winning schemes include the restoration of the historic Stoneyway steps in Bridgnorth, Shropshire; the restoration of a Victorian drinking fountain in Clevedon, Avon; and the reconstruction of a windmill in Sleaford, Lincolnshire.

**Pilot identified**

The body of a British pilot found in the wreckage of his Spitfire which crashed at Hollingbourne, Kent, on September 27, 1940, has been identified from documents in the aircraft as Sergeant Ernest Scott, aged 23, from Doncaster, South Yorkshire.

**Subsidence plan**

British Coal is to introduce a low-cost scheme operated by the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators for resolving differences between itself and householders who claim that their properties have been damaged by subsidence.

**Modelmaker dies**

Bill Roberts, who helped to create the Daleks in the BBC television series *Dr Who* and who also made models for *The Guns of Navarone* and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, died aged 73.

**Splashing out**

Arundel district council has been offered £250,000 by a retired secretary, who wishes to remain anonymous, to allow plans for a £3.5 million swimming pool at Bognor Regis, West Sussex, to proceed.

**Solvent test**

Trading standards officers in Hampshire are testing Teenage Mutant Ninja Hero Turd pencil cases to discover if a reported repulsive smell is caused by an industrial solvent that is a respiratory irritant.

**Homes go-ahead**

The environment secretary has given permission for 37,000 homes to be built in Cornwall before 2001. This is 4,000 more than the county council requested.

**Gelignite find**

A stick of gelignite without a detonator posted to the offices of *The Sun* in Wapping, east London, from Perth, Western Australia, was removed by the bomb squad yesterday.

## Call for full details on Scottish senate plans

By KERRY GILL

THE Conservative party was asked yesterday to give a full explanation of its plans for an elected Scottish senate at a session of the Scottish grand committee in Edinburgh early in the new year.

Government ministers and senior Conservatives are studying the feasibility of a Scottish senate which would oversee the Scottish Office and could undertake some duties presently controlled by regional councils. The nine regional authorities would be scrapped leaving one tier of local government.

Donald Dewar, Labour's Scottish spokesman, speaking in Glasgow as the Scottish

Constitutional Convention outlined its future campaign for a devolved parliament, said a debate would also force the Tories to explain to the country why they were against the convention's own proposals.

Mr Dewar said that Ian Lang, the Scottish secretary, appeared to back consideration of the senate proposal, which would involve the election of two members from each of Scotland's nine regional authorities.

"We are giving him the opportunity to come off the fence and make it clear whether or not he is in favour of a change," he added.

## 'Golden boy' John Moore to quit

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL REPORTER

JOHN MOORE has become the sixth MP who has served in a Thatcher cabinet since the last election to announce his retirement from the Commons. He has told his constituency party that he will retire at the end of this parliament.

The former golden boy of politics, once marked down as a likely successor to Margaret Thatcher, will not fight Croydon Central at the next general election. He has said he plans to stay on, though colleagues predict he may change his mind after witnessing Mrs Thatcher's downfall.

Mr Moore, who is 53, was secretary of state in the transport, health and social services and social security departments before being dropped

from the cabinet by Mrs Thatcher last year. He leaves a Tory majority of 12,617 at Croydon Central.

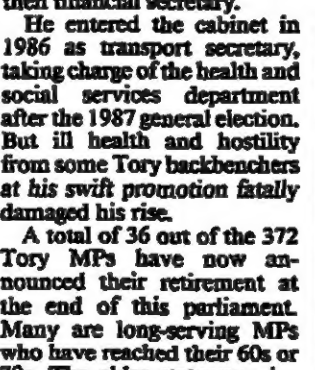
He said yesterday: "I feel especially lucky to have had the chance to serve ten years as a Government minister. However, now I am no longer a minister, my business interests have begun to expand and after the next election the travel involved to north America and the Far East as well as Europe will be more than would be compatible with my duties as an MP."

In common with Cecil Parkinson, Nicholas Ridley and Nigel Lawson, Mr Moore was a keen privatiser and ideologically in tune with the former prime minister's free market and monetarist creed.

Within a year of entering the Commons in 1974 he took on the vice-chairmanship of the party with responsibility for youth. In 1979 he started up as a junior energy minister, followed by three years at the Treasury as economic and then financial secretary.

He entered the cabinet in 1986 as transport secretary, taking charge of the health and social services department after the 1987 general election. But ill health and hostility from some Tory backbenchers at his swift promotion fatally damaged his rise.

A total of 36 out of the 372 Tory MPs have now announced their retirement at the end of this parliament. Many are long-serving MPs who have reached their 60s or 70s. The elder statesmen include Sir John Stokes (Halesowen and Stourbridge),



Moore: business interests have begun to expand

## Tories defeated in Eastbourne again

By DOUGLAS BROOM, LOCAL GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE Conservatives have suffered a second electoral defeat in Eastbourne, formerly a Tory safe seat, two months after the Liberal Democrats beat the man they had nominated to succeed Ian Gow as MP.

Early yesterday the Liberal Democrats robbed the Tories of an overall majority on the borough council in a municipal by-election caused by the death of the sitting councillor.

Ronald Parsons won the Ocklynge ward for the Liberal Democrats, beating his Conservative rival Albert Penhaligon by 77 votes in a turnout of only 27.8 per cent. Both parties now have 14 seats on the council, with the remaining two wards held by an independent and a Labour councillor. The mayor is a Conservative and the Tories could try to govern using his casting vote.

Dennis Cullen, the Conservative leader on the council and a retired bank manager, said last night that talks would be held between the parties to work out a way of running the borough until the municipal elections in May. He blamed the same "protest vote" that defeated Richard Hickmet, the Tory candidate in the parliamentary by-election, for the defeat.

The result demonstrates that the tide has turned in our favour," Alan Shuttleworth, a primary school deputy headmaster who leads of the Liberal Democrats on the council, said. "The significance of this victory lies in the fact that this ward has been held by the Tories ever since it was created. No-one has ever believed that the Tories could be beaten in this seat. This result demonstrates that the tide has turned in our favour."

Mr Cullen said: "There is still a strong protest vote about the poll tax and high interest rates but you must remember that this was a very low turnout."

Eastbourne borough council, which was controlled by the Liberals between 1973 and 1988 before falling to the Tories, set the highest community charge in East Sussex this year at £385. The tax is expected to rise significantly in April, boosted by an extra £21 a head to cover the cost of a leisure complex.

The Conservatives blame the Liberal Democrats for setting up a complex deal to finance the Sovereign Centre, but the Democrats say that Tory changes to the scheme since 1988 are responsible for the increased cost.

Alan Shuttleworth, a primary school deputy headmaster who leads of the Liberal Democrats on the council, said: "The significance of this victory lies in the fact that this ward has been held by the Tories ever since it was created. No-one has ever believed that the Tories could be beaten in this seat. This result demonstrates that the tide has turned in our favour."

Like all small children she wants lots of things for Christmas.



- She wants food.
- She wants vaccinations.
- She wants clean water to drink.
- She wants firewood.
- She wants chickens to tend.
- She wants a place to call home.
- She wants to learn to read and write.
- She wants your help to help herself.
- She wants a life for Christmas.

I want to help her help herself. I want to help give her a life for Christmas.

I enclose cheque/PO for £ \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

To: Christian Aid, PO Box 100, London SE1 7RT (Tel: 071-620 4444).

Christian Aid



مكتبة من الأص



# Major insists only Saddam can now stop war in Gulf

FROM ROBIN OAKLEY IN WASHINGTON

JOHN Major spent out yesterday that only one man could now prevent war in the Gulf — President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

The prime minister, in a series of interviews on American television, insisted that a partial withdrawal was not enough and that there could be no question of negotiation with the man who was "dismantling Kuwait day by day" and turning it into what was "essentially a prison camp".

With American public opinion on the use of force much more doubtful than that in Britain, Mr Major told ABC: "The person who can stop the war is Saddam Hussein. If he thinks the West aren't serious, he might ask himself why the United States has 400,000 troops in the Gulf and the UK nearly 40,000. What he has done is unforgivable, and it

has to be reversed. Only he can stop a conflict."

Mr Major and President Bush were last night co-ordinating their tactics in the event of President Saddam seeking to drive wedges into Western policy with a partial withdrawal. Through his interviews yesterday, Mr Major gave repeated warnings that "a partial pull-out won't do," and denied suggestions that the Western alliance would weaken if President Saddam pulled his forces out of the rest of Kuwait, save for two Gulf islands and part of the disputed oilfield.

If President Saddam were allowed to gain anything from his military adventure, he argued, then small countries across the world would wonder about their futures. A moral principle was involved. Conscious of American opinion polls and of misgivings in Congress, Mr Major said that nobody wanted a war. If President Saddam withdrew, "there will not be a war and he will not be attacked". But Mr Major insisted there could be no question of negotiations with the man responsible for "a unilateral piece of nastiness". There was, he said, nothing to negotiate about, and it would be encouraging President Saddam to play games.

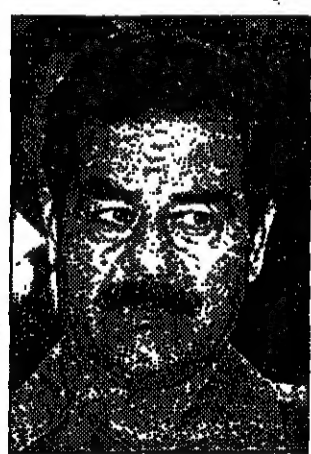
Mr Major was cautious in his response to the resignation of Edward Shevardnadze, conceding himself with paying tribute to the former Soviet foreign minister's record as a man of peace. He emphasised that the first message from President Gorbachev had been an affirmation that Soviet policy would not change, and noted that the affirmation had been immediately endorsed by the Soviet People's Congress.

He expected that Mr Gorbachev would choose to replace Mr Shevardnadze with another reformer, and said that it was too early to speculate about military repression and civil war, although he agreed that the Soviet had heard talk of such repression "for weeks".

Asked if the West should continue food and technical aid, he said it should be conditional on perestroika being maintained. He told NBC: "A lot of people in Russia are not eating. Provided we are certain reform is continuing and going in the right direction, then of course we should help."

Mr Major was questioned closely by interviewers on how much he represented continuity with Margaret Thatcher and what change he would offer. He replied that, while every prime minister had his or her own style, his objectives and Mrs Thatcher's were "strikingly similar".

Reform urged, page 6



Saddam: must not gain from military adventure



Bethlehem arrest: a Palestinian, accused of throwing stones at security forces, kneeling yesterday near Manger Square in Bethlehem in the West Bank, guarded by Israeli border policemen armed with M16 rifles

## Baghdad decamps to wilderness

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN RASHIDIYA

HUNDREDS of thousands of Baghdad residents, according to official figures, poured out of the city yesterday in Iraq's largest ever civil defence drill, mounted to evacuate citizens in case of an air attack.

At the height of the evacuation, Samir Mohammad Abdul Wahhab, the Iraqi interior minister, toured the dusty, desolate plain of Rashidiya, 10 miles north of Baghdad, and declared himself pleased with the exercise. He issued a warning to the evacuees, the majority of whom came from the Saddam district of East Baghdad, that the next time could be the real thing and to "prepare for the worst".

The carefully arranged nine-hour exercise looked chaotic and was viewed with some scepticism by observers. The common view is that, in the event of war, an air strike on Baghdad would carry no more than a few minutes' warning and certainly give no time to allow civil defence authorities to stage an evacuation on the scale envisaged.

No more than about 10,000 or so evacuees were to be seen in Rashidiya, but officials said hundreds of thousands of others were scattered around this and six other camps near Baghdad. "It proves that we are dealing with this successfully," Mr Wahhab told journalists, standing next to one of hundreds of tents hastily pitched for the occasion. He confirmed that there

was a plan to evacuate the entire metropolis of 3.5 million inhabitants in case of an air attack after the January 15 deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait.

The minister insisted that "Iraqi women and children here, as you can see, are very happy and are looking forward to the coming battle, if there is one". He added: "Any country under threat would have to solve this problem of its citizens accordingly, but we will refuse to give in to others."

The news that President Saddam Hussein, in a German television interview yesterday, reiterated that Iraq would not withdraw from Kuwait, gave rise to nervous, furtive looks among civil defence workers here, who looked as though they preferred to be somewhere else. The faces of many of the evacuees, the average age of whom seemed to be about 14, revealed a mixture of bewilderment and youthful pride. "I am not scared, why should I be scared?" said Ali, a Baghdad student.

He admitted it was "no fun" being awakened at five in the morning to be piled into a bus for the chilly drive to a tent in the middle of nowhere. And his opinion of the threat of war? "Let it come," he replied. "We will fight to defend our honour."

Was he not concerned that

## Karami faces uphill fight to build cabinet

FROM ALI JABER IN BEIRUT

LEBANON's new prime minister, Omar Karami, yesterday started to consult parliamentarians as a first step towards forming a national reconciliation cabinet, amid doubts that his efforts can bring warring militia leaders to sit together in one government.

President Elias Hrawi assigned Mr Karami to form the new cabinet after the former prime minister, Salim al-Hoss, resigned on Wednesday. Mr Karami, aged 55, comes from a prominent Sunni family in the port city of Tripoli, north of Beirut. He is the brother of the late prime minister, Rashid Karami, who was killed in a helicopter

explosion in 1987. Ironically, Mr Karami is required to invite to his cabinet the various Lebanese militia leaders who fuelled the country's civil war for the past 15 years. Among them is Samir Geagea, leader of the Christian hardline militia, the Lebanese Forces, who was accused by Mr Karami only a month ago of being behind his brother's assassination.

The proposed cabinet will also include rivals who have fought since 1975. Some of them are even wanted by police, such as Elie Hobeika, whose name was linked to the killing of Palestinian refugees in Beirut's Sabra and Chatila camps in 1982.

gloomy and it poured with rain.

In his stretched limousine Mr Major was whisked from the embassy to the White House to meet Vice-President Dan Quayle, on to the state department to meet James Baker, the Secretary of State, to Capitol Hill for lunch with congressional leaders, then back to the south lawn of the White House to board Marine One with President Bush for the flight to Camp David.

At every stop photo opportunities were laid on. These did not all go quite according to plan. As Mr Major posed for photographers with Mr Quayle, the vice-president began an involved conversation with the American media about American football and whether the New York Giants could function without Phil Sims, their injured quarterback.

Mr Major, a Chelsea fan, looked on baffled.

## Relieved Israelis dismiss UN vote

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT IN JERUSALEM

ISRAELI officials yesterday dismissed the unanimous United Nations Security Council resolution deploring Israel's deportation of Palestinian activists, but expressed relief that the document did not call for a Middle East peace conference.

Yitzhak Shamir, the prime minister, called the vote anti-Israeli. The resolution "joins the string of negative decisions which rest peacefully in the archives of the United Nations without anyone paying attention to them".

David Levy, the foreign minister, was more conciliatory. He also called the resolution "an anti-Israeli proposal" and said of the United Nations: "There is no justice there." He noted, however, that the United States had managed to get the call for an international conference out of the resolution and into a separate, non-binding statement read by the security council's president.

"It is important to see what the United States did in order to neutralise many harsh, anti-Israeli formulas from the resolution," Mr Levy said in a broadcast on army radio.

But Mr Levy criticised the Americans for not vetoing the resolution, saying the US felt pressured not to damage the Arab coalition it put together in the Gulf. Israel has consistently opposed an international conference, fearing it could be pressured to make unwanted concessions.

The UN vote is the third time that the United States has declined to protect Israel from international criticism at the United Nations. Earlier, the United States twice supported resolutions that criticised Israel's handling of the Temple Mount incident on October 8, in which at least 18 Palestinians were killed by police gunfire.

Palestinians have stepped up their call for international protection from the Israelis. Some said yesterday they were disappointed that the UN resolution did not take stronger steps to protect them.

Christian appeal: Nine Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Protestant bishops in the Holy Land appealed yesterday for world leaders to "follow the course of negotiation" to prevent war in the region and expressed concern about human rights violations in the occupied territories.

## Khmer leader collapses at talks

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN PARIS

A CONFERENCE to consider a UN peace plan for Cambodia hit trouble yesterday when Hun Sen, the Cambodian prime minister, was rushed to hospital from the conference after collapsing.

Sources said Mr Sen was suffering only from "fatigue" after arriving on the long flight from Cambodia. Witnesses who saw him in the ambulance said he was conscious.

France earlier told the Cambodian leaders attending the talks to accept the UN proposals quickly, because the international community had "other priorities" as well.

About 150 Cambodians, including a dozen Buddhist monks chanting and beating drums, demonstrated and waved placards saying "Cambodia wants peace now" outside the Kleber Centre in Paris, where the new Cambodian National Supreme Council was meeting.

An official schedule for the discussions echoed speculation by Western and Asian diplomats that the meeting could collapse in disarray. It said the talks would continue today "in the event that the work is pursued".

The participants included the Khmer Rouge leader, Kieu Samphan, and his defence minister, Son Sen, who is widely believed to have been responsible, together with Pol Pot, for the mass killings carried out by Khmer Rouge guerrillas in the late 1970s. Also present were Norodom Ranariddh, the son of the flamboyant former Cambodian monarch, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, who chose not to attend.

The French foreign minister, Roland Dumas, opened the proceedings in his capacity as co-chairman, with Indonesia, of an international conference seeking an end to the conflict. "The international community cannot concentrate indefinitely on the fate of Cambodia," he said.

"Gambles on time are in vain," he said. "Other priorities require and will require our attention," he said in an obvious reference to the Gulf confrontation.

The supreme national council consists of six representatives of the Cambodian government and two from each of the three main resistance groups. It is designed to represent Cambodian sovereignty before elections.

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## Mild mortal replaces a demigod

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

When Margaret Thatcher appeared on American television, viewers would have to turn the volume down. When John Major unveiled himself to a curious nation yesterday, he had to turn the volume up. The substance of what they heard, however, was virtually identical.

Making his prime ministerial debut here, Mr Major was awake before dawn and with the make-up artist by 7.00am. Within the next 45 minutes, switching from elegant reception room to elegant reception room in the British ambassador's Lutyns residence, he gave four consecutive interviews to the network breakfast shows, playing the gentle lobs of his American questioners with the straightest of bats.

His purpose was clear. Four times he emphasised that he would continue

Margaret Thatcher's tough stand against Iraq in the Gulf confrontation. Four times he emphasised that under his leadership there would be little change in government policy in general.

About Mrs Thatcher he had only the nicest things to say, noting at one point that she had received more votes than him in the leadership ballots, at another gently protesting about an interviewer's "unkind interpretation" of her fall from power.

In a land where Mrs Thatcher still enjoys the status of a demigod, this was undoubtedly a prudent approach. One of the objectives of Mr Major's two-day visit is to establish his identity in America and to emerge from the formidable shadow of his predecessor.

If you are a man of such mild demeanour as Mr Major, it is hard to see how

that can be done if you have nothing radically different to say. His interviewers were relieved to encounter a British prime minister not bent on eating them alive, one who discussed and did not hector. "It was like night and day," observed Gene Randall of CNN.

But they also gave the impression that they would soon be missing Mrs Thatcher. Though slightly nervous, Mr Major was polished and articulate, they agreed, but not great television.

"He was determined not to make news," lamented Bill Plante of CBS. "He seems a nice enough fellow but much more grey, and I don't just mean the colour of his hair. Coming after her is going to be quite a burden."

When Mrs Thatcher came to town, there was always a certain electricity in the air. Yesterday Washington was overcast and

cepter omical figures, they suspected terrorists and then killed 1,039 people and they left."



## Western banks see little use for aid without Soviet reforms

By SUSAN ELLICOTT in WASHINGTON and MICHAEL BINYON in BRUSSELS

THE Soviet Union should launch deep reforms of its economy before Western nations provide massive financial aid to support its large budget deficit, according to a broad survey carried out for the seven leading industrial nations by the world's top lending institutions.

"Without such a reform, additional financial resources would be of little or no lasting value," the 50-page report said. "With it, assistance could provide important support during a time of a difficult transition to integration of the USSR into the world economy, with benefits for all partners."

The report by institutions including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development and the newly formed European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, was the most thorough

to date of the Soviet economy. It was sent to leaders of G-7 countries on Thursday.

In a separate report, the European Commission said in Brussels yesterday that the resignation of Eduard Shevardnadze makes a collapse of the Soviet economy more likely and will slow down the process of reform.

"Despite Mr Shevardnadze's motives, it is extremely difficult to appreciate his decision," a senior EC official responsible for co-ordinating EC food aid said.

He predicted that the turmoil now unleashed would make the need for aid more urgent, but would make it even harder for the Russians to produce a feasible plan for reform.

Announcing the results of the extensive EC study of the Soviet economic institutions and political structures, the official said "reform fatigue" had now set in. Without public support, the reforms would not catch on.

The 217-page report, commissioned by EC leaders at the Dublin summit in June, paints a bleak picture of political chaos and economic stagnation.

The report said the EC could not now risk giving the Soviet Union help to remedy its crippling balance of payments because the Soviet government had neither credible reforms on the table nor the necessary authority to carry them out.

The EC report said that the Soviet Union would need \$8 billion to \$11 billion (£5.7 billion) next year to bridge its balance of payments gap with other countries. The total Soviet shortfall was between \$23 and \$26 billion, but some \$15 billion had been pledged by the EC and other countries. It also found that, although agricultural output had increased, up to 40 per cent of production was lost before it reached the shops.

"It is clear that without firm and concerted action to reform the economic system, it will drift towards collapse," a summary of the EC report said.

The Soviet budget deficit was about 10 per cent of the gross domestic product in 1990. "Our impression is that without strong corrective measures, the deficit could reach 20 per cent of GDP next year."

In the other gloomy report to G-7 leaders, the organisations conclude that Soviet authorities "face an enormous task" spread over years and involving changes in all key sectors of the economy, including agriculture, distribution, energy and manufacturing, as well as reforms of the legal, financial and trade systems. It recommends that Mr Gorbachev speed up economic reforms by removing price controls on basic items and freezing wages.

The language of the report was cautious, saying technical assistance from the private sector "could play a substantial role", but it stopped short of saying the economy was in such disarray that economic aid would be wasted. "The rest of the world can help the reform process," it went on, noting that there was also a case for humanitarian aid once the Soviet Union ironed out distribution problems.

American officials are expected to discuss the report in the coming days with allies and Mr Bush is considering sending an economic team to the Soviet Union to advise Mr Gorbachev on possible further measures to reform the Soviet economy. In past weeks, the Soviet leader has taken steps to centralise economic management. In an unusual move, the World Bank and the IMF cancelled a related press conference.

The organisations carried out the study at the request of the Houston summit of the leaders of the US, Germany, Japan, Britain, Canada, France and Italy last summer. It called for rapid trade liberalisation and the possible continued subsidy of rents and a few essential consumer goods in the near term in order to provide "an effective safety net" to those at or near the poverty line.

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Leading article, page 9



Kremlin gallery: speakers at the Congress of People's Deputies where debate continued yesterday on the way through the current political turmoil, from left, Anatoli Sobchal, mayor of Leningrad, Vladimir Chervyakov, a deputy from Kiev, and Yevgeni Primakov, front-runner to succeed Eduard Shevardnadze as foreign minister

## Successor would stick to Shevardnadze policy

By ANDREW McEWEN, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE West may find the Soviet Union somewhat tougher to deal with if, as many expect, Yevgeni Primakov replaces Eduard Shevardnadze as foreign minister.

The spectacular concessions which Mr Shevardnadze made to change the way in which the Western world viewed Moscow would probably stop, but neither Mr Primakov nor others who are viewed as possible candidates would want to reverse Mr Shevardnadze's achievements.

The assumption that Mr Primakov is the leading candidate depends on President Gorbachev making his choice from among the foreign policy establishment. However, Mr Shevardnadze was an outsider with little foreign policy experience, and it would not be out of character for Mr Gorbachev to spring another surprise.

The most likely choices among the established names are Yuli

Vorontsov, ambassador to the United Nations, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, ambassador to Washington, and Vladimir Petrovsky, deputy foreign minister. Yuri Dubinin, a former ambassador to the United Nations, also has sufficient seniority and ability. All support the huge policy changes which have been made under Mr Shevardnadze.

Aleksandr Yakovlev is not seen as a candidate, although he was the leading intellectual force behind the reforms and his name is well known outside the Soviet Union. Most observers regard him as politically finished, though still respected.

Dr Alex Pravda, fellow of St Antony's College, Oxford, said that if any of these men were chosen there would be no reason for the West to be concerned. Although tougher, Mr Primakov would make an able interlocutor. His name had been mentioned for

the last year as a possible successor because of rumours that Mr Shevardnadze might be suffering from heart trouble.

"He is a very good trouble-shooter, pretty thoughtful, good at his job, proven, quick and widely experienced," he said. Although recently best known to the West as a Middle East expert, he was an all-rounder and was skilled at media relations.

Dr Pravda expected a change of style but not substance. "I think we shall see a slightly tougher attitude; slower to be co-operative." Mr Primakov would probably push harder than Mr Shevardnadze had done to secure all he could in return for concessions. "But I don't see any change in strategy," he added.

Western capitals are growing concerned over apparent attempts by the Soviet military to circumvent the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty, switching some

army units to the navy and under-declaring some weapons. Dr Pravda said Mr Primakov would not sympathise with this but would try to get the best deal for the Soviet armed forces, limiting the number of weapons to be destroyed.

Mr Primakov's visits to Baghdad to see President Saddam Hussein were not viewed with favour by Western capitals. They accepted that Moscow was better placed than the West to undertake such a trip, but Mr Primakov's initial willingness to reach a deal struck the wrong note. It is unclear whether this would count against him with Mr Gorbachev.

Mr Vorontsov is seen by some Western diplomats as the next most likely choice after Mr Primakov. Both men are 71, which would be a disadvantage for a Western politician but would probably not be considered too old by Moscow. Mr Vorontsov's

work as temporary ambassador to Kabul in 1989 played an important part in the Soviet disengagement from Afghanistan. Like Mr Primakov he is a skilled trouble-shooter, and also has expert knowledge of United States-Soviet arms control negotiations.

Mr Bessmertnykh is seen as an able diplomat, but less of an all-rounder than Mr Primakov, carrying less political weight. He was, however, previously a deputy foreign minister and has enough experience.

Vladimir Petrovsky, a deputy foreign minister and career diplomat, has told Tass that Soviet foreign policy will not be affected by Mr Shevardnadze's resignation.

Dr Pravda sees Mr Petrovsky as being very professional, polite, pleasant, and favourable to the United Nations, but lacking in political weight, a view shared by other sources.



Bleak mid-winter: shoppers wandering round a big Moscow supermarket hung with festive Christmas tinsel and bright food section indicators. All that is missing is the food to buy

## Israel airlifts Jews in Soviet exodus

By OUR FOREIGN STAFF

SOVIET Jews, apparently fearful of increasing political chaos under President Gorbachev, are flooding into Israel this weekend.

Israeli immigration authorities say that as many as 8,000 Soviet Jews may come here in the four days ending at midnight today.

The Jewish state has been predicting a rising tide of newcomers because of political turmoil in the Soviet Union. The latest wave appears to have been spurred, at least in part, by the surprise resignation this week of Eduard Shevardnadze, the Soviet foreign minister.

Simha Dinitz, who heads the Jewish Agency, a quasi-government group that supervises immigration, said yesterday: "There is no doubt the wave that is growing is partly a response to the worsening situation in the Soviet Union and the debilitation of the government." He added: "We had predicted that, and felt it in recent days, even before Mr Shevardnadze resigned."

Since Soviet emigration restrictions were lifted in the spring of 1989, more than 170,000 Soviet Jews have arrived in Israel. The government predicts that up to one million Soviet citizens will come by the end of 1992.

The scene at Israel's main international airport near Tel Aviv was chaotic yesterday. Flights from transit points in Budapest and Warsaw were coming in every hour.

Rabbinical authorities have given the government and its national airline, El Al, permission to fly today, the Jewish Sabbath, to get as many people here as quickly as possible.

One of those who arrived yesterday was Yurevich Gertsovich, aged 50, a librarian from the Soviet town of Minsk. She came via Budapest with 15 relatives. "There is, of course, a danger now that they may close the doors to immigration," she said. "Nothing good has ever come out of waiting."

A chemistry professor from Moscow, Aleksandr Bronstein, aged 55, arrived from Warsaw. "The situation is now very bad," he said. "The resignation of Mr Shevardnadze is very bad for the government, bad for democracy. It is certainly possible that the gates may close."

In addition to El Al flights the Polish Lot airline and the Hungarian Malev airline have put on extra flights to assist in the airlift. In the western Ukraine, an ethnic row among Soviet soldiers turned into a gun battle that injured 21, the official Tass news agency said yesterday.

Soldiers in a railway battalion stationed in the town of Chop, on the Hungarian border, quarrelled and then blazed away with bullets. "Things went so far as an attack on the arms stores, the arsenal and guardhouses. Officers arriving at the scene were also attacked," said Tass, quoting a local newspaper report.

Guards fired into the legs of the rioting soldiers - Armenians, Azeris, Uzbeks, Chechens and Turkmenians - to stop a battle that lasted hours, the report said.

Soviet ethnic tensions are particularly acute in the armed forces, where abuse and assaults on minority-group soldiers are common.

## Warning by Castro on Soviet split

Havana - President Castro of Cuba says the Soviet Union is facing the danger of civil war and is under threat from Western-backed internal forces which want to wipe out socialism and break up the country.

In a three-hour speech to university students on Thursday night, he also attacked Czechoslovakia for deciding to stop representing Cuban diplomatic interests in America, saying that Prague was acting as "an agent of imperialism."

Dr Castro spoke hours after Eduard Shevardnadze announced his resignation as Soviet foreign minister. But the president made no mention of it nor did he identify the opposing forces in the Soviet Union. "There are forces which want to dismantle the Soviet Union and wipe it off the map," he declared. "There are forces which are dreaming... of sweeping away socialism from the Soviet Union, of sweeping away everything that signifies Soviet power and internationalism, everything that means relations with Cuba." (Reuter)

## Peking pledges 'friendly' ties

Peking - China said that the resignation of Mr Shevardnadze was an issue for the Soviet Union, not for China. The Peking foreign ministry said in a terse statement: "We will continue to develop friendly and neighbourly relations with the Soviet Union on the basis of peaceful coexistence."

Mr Shevardnadze was instrumental in improving Soviet ties with China. His meetings with Chinese officials in February 1989 paved the way for President Gorbachev's historic visit to Peking three months later, ending a long-standing dispute over communist ideology. (Reuter)

## Lithuanian fears

Tokyo - Kazimiera Prunskiene, the Lithuanian prime minister, said hardliners were gaining the upper hand in Kremlin policy in a development that could lead to the imposition of martial law in the three Soviet Baltic republics. She was verging on tears at times as she commented on Mr Shevardnadze's resignation. Mrs Prunskiene was in Japan for an unofficial visit. (Reuter)

## PLO hopes rise

Tunis - Abdullah Hourani, a member of the executive committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation and a frequent visitor to Moscow, said the PLO hoped that, with the resignation of Mr Shevardnadze, the Kremlin would abandon "provocative" Middle East policies and distance itself from America. (Reuter)

## New York condemns Hollywood's Bonfire to the stake

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN NEW YORK

PERHAPS nobody should have tried to make a film out of *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, Tom Wolfe's withering satire of New York on the crest of the roaring Eighties. The 1987 novel, with its "masters of the universe" financiers and cast of local rogues, is now so embedded in the city's mythology that any film would seem presumptuous.

But even with that caution, the movie world was taken aback by the savagery unleashed by the critics on Brian De Palma's version when it opened yesterday. "A misuse of a thousand inanities... This is a failure of epic proportion. You've got to be a genius to make a movie this bad," said Joel Siegel, of ABC television, in a typical appraisal. The film, which stars Tom Hanks and Bruce Willis, is being depicted as one of the

biggest disasters since *Ishtar* or *Heaven's Gate*, those other high-priced flops of recent Hollywood history. "A glitzy dud," said *Variety*.

De Palma had just got it completely wrong, said most reviewers, who included a few amateurs such as Edward Koch, the former mayor and a figure caricatured in the book. "Bonfire is worse seeing if you liked *Dick Tracy* and *Batman*," sniffed Mr Koch, the man who presided over the city's decade of stretched limousines. He reviewed the film for *The Wall Street Journal*, the parish daily of the masters of the universe.

"No one cast in this movie ever stood a chance, they all go down with the ship," said *Newsweek*. "Like Sherman McCoy, the hero, Brian De Palma makes one fatal choice that leads to disaster. The disaster is the movie." In the

book, McCoy's mistake is his failure to report a car accident. He becomes the victim of a racial-political furor in which he loses everything.

"Not a bonfire, but a pilot light of the inanities," said *The Washington Post*. "A calamity of miscasting and commercial concessions." *USA Today* wondered if the scriptwriter had read the book. "Thudding dialogue... appalling wrong-headed," said its review. "Gross and unfunny," said *The New York Times*. "This movie never seems to know what it's supposed to be."

De Palma's mistake, in every-one's opinion, was to try to make a cartoon-like moral fable out of a satire that lambasted with equal ferocity Wall Street wizards, Park Avenue socialites, ambitious politicians, Harlem punks and drunken British newspapermen. Responding to the dictates of

Hollywood and the racial taboos of the Bush age, De Palma softened the attack on New York blacks and scrapped the grim ending in favour of a sugary coda in which the Bronx judge, transformed from Jewish to black, tells the hero: "Go home and be decent."

Nobody, but nobody, in New York talks like that. Equally implausible, the critics noted, was Bruce Willis's portrayal of Fallow, the reporter who pursues McCoy. In the book Fallow was an archetypal Lunchtime O'Booze, transplanted from Fleet Street. Willis plays him as a heavy-drinking American, a type which no longer exists.

Apart from anything else the final scene is "a monumental legal error," said Mr Koch, who is now a practising lawyer again. Burton Roberts, the Bronx judge who provided the model for Judge

Myron Kovitsky, thought the whole movie was a farce.

Wolfe, who reaped several hundred thousand pounds from the film rights, has remained diplomatic. "This is Brian De Palma's movie, with his own version of the plot, his own dialogue, his signature on whatever he does," the author said.

But others noted yesterday that New York hardly needed to see the film, since the black comedy of real life in the Big Apple continues to rival anything a satirist could dream up. In two episodes that could have come straight from the novel on Thursday, the Speaker of the New York assembly was charged with corruption, and in a city court a teenager interrupted the judge who was lecturing him after his conviction for raping a woman aged 82. "Hey, judge, just sentence me already," he shouted. He got 25 years.



Wolfe: diplomatic about the film of his novel

مكذبا من الأصل



## Hoxha widow follows Stalin statue into retirement

FROM RICHARD BASSETT AND DESSA TREVISAN IN BELGRADE

TWO symbols of hardline communist rule in Albania were removed from positions of power yesterday. Nexhmije Hoxha, the widow of Albania's dictator, Enver Hoxha, retired as president of the influential Democratic Front, a communist-dominated political umbrella organisation.

At the same time, a vast statue of Stalin was taken down in Tirana's Skanderbeg Square. By a special government decree all Stalin statues were ordered to be dismantled throughout Albania.

The departure of Mrs Hoxha, officially for reasons of old age, paves the way for

the ending of the Hoxha personality cult.

Seen by many as a powerful behind-the-scenes political influence, Mrs Hoxha's prestige appears to have been on the wane since the beginning of this year. Her closest associates in the communist party's politburo have also been reshuffled. The Democratic Front, which still embraces most political organisations, was clearly no longer a suitable vehicle for Mrs Hoxha's activities. She was replaced by President Alia's close associate, Adil Carani, the prime minister.

Her removal, however, is no more than touching the tip of the Hoxha iceberg. Family ties, in particular the intermarriage between so many members of Albania's ruling elite, have given the political class a cohesion absent in any other European country. It will be difficult to retire Mrs Hoxha without also demoting many other members of her clan.

The removal of the Stalin statue was another blow against the old order. Portraits of the Soviet dictator are to be found everywhere in Albania. They are often close to the no less ubiquitous statues of Hoxha. The disappearance of the Stalin statue in Tirana begs the question as to how long the Hoxha statues will remain.

Already in Shkoder, angry demonstrators dynamited Hoxha's statue after stuffing its mouth with grass, in a symbolic reply to Hoxha's oft-repeated phrase that the Albanian people would "rather eat grass than take help from the imperialists".

Since Hoxha's death in 1985, his widow, together with Mr Alia, have carried on the torch of Hoxha's statist policies. It remains to be seen whether the government can credibly turn over a new leaf with President Alia still in place. His role as Hoxha's favourite protégé compromises him heavily and raises the question of personal responsibility for the oppression during four decades of communist rule.

Mr Alia played a crucial role in the famous showdown between Hoxha and Mehmet Shehu, the former prime minister, who was shot by Hoxha during a heated cabinet meeting in 1981.

It is difficult to see Mr Alia emerging with clean hands should this incident be properly investigated.

Albania has been one of the bloodiest of European communist states. Repeated purges, first after the break with Yugoslavia in 1948, then after the break with Moscow in 1960, and then after the conflict with Mehmet Shehu, have left many families bereaved and nursing their grievances.

It is hard to envisage the "continuity" promised by President Alia in the coming months with him playing a key role in Albania's moves towards democracy.

## Woman dies in Greek earthquake

Athens — An elderly woman was killed and more than 60 people injured in a violent earthquake that shook northern Greece and neighbouring Bulgaria (Chris Eliou writes).

The tremor, measuring 5.5 on the Richter scale, was about 35 miles northwest of Thessaloniki, Greece's northern capital. It was strongly felt in most towns and cities of central and western Macedonia, causing panic among inhabitants who rushed out to village and city squares.

## Prisoner contact

Peking — Richard Schifter, America's top human rights official, managed to meet a Chinese dissident detained last year, a Western resident said. Mr Schifter met the unnamed academic in Shanghai, and although the authorities were probably aware of the meeting they may not have approved it. (Reuters)

## Chamorro gain

Managua — President Chamorro of Nicaragua won a battle over funding for the country's armed forces when the national assembly voted after an all-night session to support her veto of a huge army spending cut. The assembly voted 69-21 with one abstention. (Reuters)

## Athens order

Athens — A Greek special magistrate said that he would order police to bring Andreas Papanastasiou, the former Socialist prime minister, to court to answer criminal charges of complicity in a bank embezzlement scandal. Mr Papanastasiou is to appear for pre-trial testimony. (Reuters)

## Wages of sin

Atlanta — The Roman Catholic church in Georgia spent more than \$21,000 (£11,000), mainly for medical bills, on the mistress of a former archbishop, Eugene Marino, church officials said. (Reuters)

## Army spurned at Romanian rallies

FROM TIM JUDAH IN BUCHAREST

IN THE months after the Romanian revolution, anti-government demonstrators would take to the streets shouting: "The army is with us." When tens of thousands of people came out on to the streets of Bucharest yesterday, the first anniversary of the killings which fired the revolution, this slogan was conspicuously absent, for there is now a widespread belief that the army was deeply involved in the killings.

People packed the main squares of Bucharest, Timisoara and other towns yesterday. In Bucharest, the commemoration ceremony turned into an anti-government protest as crowds in University Square demanded the resignation of President Iliescu and his National Salvation Front government.

Two senators were heckled and prevented from laying wreaths at a shrine for the dead and the windscreen of their car was smashed. "Go away, traitors," the protesters shouted at the senators. Gelu Voican and Dan Iosif, who had been among last year's anti-Ceausescu demonstrators. They escaped unhurt.

A year ago the events of the revolution were easily explained. As the regime of Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife, Elena, crumbled, loyal units of his dreaded Securitate opened fire on the crowds. According to generally accepted official figures, they killed 1,039 people and,

according to a recent army statement, the army subsequently turned over 1,022 "terrorists" to the Romanian prosecution services for trial.

These "terrorists" have since disappeared. There have been only eight convictions, including those of Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu who were executed on Christmas Day. Many Romanians now believe that there has been a comprehensive cover-up. President Iliescu, Petre Roman, the prime minister, and especially Atanase Stanculescu, the defence minister, have not been able to shake off allegations that, either before or during the revolution, a deal was made with the Securitate and the army to hide their responsibility.

More than a hundred people died in Timisoara, but there have been no convictions for this. A senior local politician who, on this question only, spoke on condition of anonymity said: "We know that the army did the greatest part of the massacre here, and those officers who ordered a ceasefire or retreated have been forced to leave or have been demoted."

Colonel Mugurel Florescu, the deputy general prosecutor, claims that there is no mystery about where the "terrorists" went. He admits that many were simply released. "We had no real witnesses," he claims. "People brought in suspected terrorists and then they left."



Taste of the West: Soviet soldiers drinking Cokes at a Christmas party at their base in Potsdam, near Berlin

## Berliners extend Christmas cheer to Soviet troops

FROM ANNE McELVOY IN BERLIN

THE luckier Soviet soldiers stationed around Berlin will swap the unpalatable rations of their chilly barracks for a cosy German Christmas next week when they are allowed to visit Berlin families in their homes for the first time.

About 250 will sit down to goose and stuffed carp as the guests of east and west Berliners who have offered them a break from the monotonous isolation they face as they await withdrawal from what was East Germany.

The pilot scheme to break down barriers between Germans and the 360,000 troops stationed there is the idea of the tabloid *Bild-Zeitung*, which has thrived for decades on unabashed communist-bashing, in improbable co-operation with the German-Soviet Friendship Society, which was run until last year by the East German state and dedicated to disseminating pro-Soviet propaganda.

Monika Freister has invited two soldiers to join her family in east Berlin for the holiday. "For so many years we have been on the receiving end of kindness from our relatives in the west. Now that things are

better for us we wanted to share our good fortune," she said.

"But most of all we want to give them some warmth and a good meal. They have a miserable time here: people take out on them their bitterness for what happened between our countries."

Her son Albi, aged 15, is enthusiastic about the chance to practise his Russian, until recently a compulsory subject in eastern schools. "We were constantly told about the great brotherhood and the proud Red Army, but when you see them here on the streets they just look hungry and depressed," he said.

The Freisters are rare in their readiness to forgive the Soviet Union for holding their country as a satellite for 40 years. Only 50 families in the east have invited soldiers as guests. From the western part of the city, offers are still pouring in.

"For west Berliners there is a strong element of curiosity and novelty about having a Soviet Army soldier to Christmas lunch," said Birgit Dobrig, one of the scheme's organisers.

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# Compassion and Mersey

Clifford Longley

Roman Catholicism in England and Wales was not in great shape in 1965. It was suspicious of other churches and of secular society and trapped in a ghetto by out-of-date rules and customs. It was about to experience the impact of the Second Vatican Council, which ended that year — and which might have torn it to bits. English Catholicism from 1850 to 1965 represented the triumph of Cardinals Wiseman and Manning and the eclipse of the ultramontane model of Catholicism over the conciliar.

A quarter of a century later the church is hardly recognisable. Catholicism has been over the world the quality of its ecumenical relations, its unity of mind and purpose, its quiet liberality, its subtle grasp of church-state relations, its commitment to a faith that is both entirely orthodox and smoothly adaptable. While the Catholic church elsewhere is in a state of upheaval, the English branch just gets on with its job. It has become the church of Newman.

The explanation for this turnaround lies in personalities more than in policies, insofar as the two can be separated. The character of the English Catholic church changed with the character of the English Catholic churchman. Cardinal John Heenan was a key transitional figure, and his successor, Cardinal Basil Hume, confirmed the transition. Behind the scenes, credit must go to the apostolic delegate (later nuncio) for many of those years, Archbishop Bruno Heim. But more than any of them, the story of those 25 years is the story of Archbishop Derek Worlock, who last night celebrated in Liverpool the silver jubilee of his consecration as a bishop.

His background is unusual for a Catholic priest of his generation (he was 70 this year), in that his father was a local agent for the Conservative party in Hampshire, his mother a suffragette. Soon after ordination, he was chosen as a private secretary by Cardinal Griffin — the first of three such posts under successive cardinals in 20 years. Then Worlock had a spell in Steyney as a parish priest before his appointment as Bishop of Portsmouth in 1965.

It was his attendance throughout the Second Vatican Council in Rome (from 1962 to 1965), as a consultant and finally as a member, which transformed his career. He was totally convinced by the council, and above all he understood it. The council wrote the agenda through which international Catholicism has been working ever since, and his position has given him enormous authority to shape events.

At this distance one can forget how remarkable the Second Vatican Council was: like a mighty battleship at full speed in a storm, turning through 180 degrees. A lot of the deck damage has still not been repaired, and many of the

crew were washed overboard, never to return. But at last the vessel was heading towards the future rather than the past. There are no charts of such waters, but the documents and decrees of the council, still almost as fresh as they were 30 years ago, lay down the broad principles of navigation. Derek Worlock has proved himself the master navigator.

Outside the Catholic church he is best known for his unique relationship with his Liverpool opposite number, the Right Rev David Sheppard, now the outstanding bishop on the Anglican bench. In no other city in Britain have the two leading churchmen (not to mention their partner, the Methodist Dr John Newton) even remotely comparable civic weight and prestige. In their time, Liverpool, the most self-destructive of cities, has been through every kind of agony and anguish short of earthquake, and at each turn of the knife "Derek and David" have been at the city's bedside together, pastors nursing it through. But in the long list of disasters — Toxteth, Heysel, Hillsborough, municipal bankruptcy, the worst unemployment and some of the worst housing in England — there is no mention of inter-faith rioting, no overspill from Belfast, even in the one place in England where bitter Protestant-Catholic communal tension was once endemic.

This does not begin to measure Derek Worlock's contribution, however, for much of it has been hidden even from ordinary Catholics in the pews. He has been vice-president of the Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference since shortly after going to Liverpool, and the one man above all on whom Cardinal Hume relies. He has raised the National Conference of Priests to maturity, while never letting it become the defiant opposition to the hierarchy it might easily have been. He has spent countless committee hours holding the organised laity in dialogue, not least through the potentially explosive conflict after Humanism Vite in 1968. His words then — that birth control was "not the acid test of Christianity" — have held that dispute in check in England ever since. And he was one of the chief architects, perhaps the master builder, of the Inter-Church Process and of the successor bodies to the British Council of Churches that came into being earlier this year. Suffice to say that without him, all this would have fallen through. Yet he has never been physically strong, nor free of illness.

Pope John Paul II may or may not have thought of it already, but Archbishop Derek Worlock is one of the few Catholic church leaders alive today who, on the merits of personal service to the church (rather than ex officio position), have earned the ultimate earthly recognition a pope can bestow. After 25 years, Archbishop Worlock fully deserves a red hat.

...and moreover

## MATTHEW PARRIS

Mr Thatcher's resignation honours list is a bore. There are no crooks in it. The best media have been able to do is trawl through lists of people who might be ill-disposed towards somebody honoured and invite them to "hit out" or "protest". Did, for instance, "representatives" of the "relatives of the victims" of the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster take the initiative in "lashing out" at Sir Jeffrey Sterling's life peerage? Or did it occur to some canny newspaper that there was a near-empty honey jar with perhaps a final smear for the first enterprising lass or laddie to place a few fivings telephone calls?

What a snivelling way to invent the news. Why not be bold? In that attempt, I am now able to unveil the real resignation honours list. This is the secret list, carried only in Mrs Thatcher's heart: the one she dare not reveal.

It divides into two parts. First there are the honours for the individuals who did most to boost and sustain the Thatcher career. These are almost entirely her enemies. For this is a woman who, by the end, had few friends but who, in the range and quality of her enemies, was magnificently endowed. She owes everything to them. It was through conflict with these people that she won her spurs. These are the men and women who gave her the battles of her choice, at the time of her choice — and lost.

It starts with a composite award — the freedom of the city of Liverpool — to the two trade unions which, in the winter of 1978, made it all possible. Step forward, Nalco and Nupre. Our congratulations.

Secondly, for his behind-the-scenes work with the loony left, and for fronting one of Mrs Thatcher's most reliable electoral assets, the Greater London Council... come on down, Kenneth Livingstone! Gosh, Ken, if you were still there, he would still be here. Who would have elected John Major to sort out the GLC?

You may think my choice of Dame Mary Warnock to stand

shoulder to shoulder with Ken Livingstone in the Thatcher hall of fame is eccentric. But there was an alternative to the ding-dong battles of left and right. More gruesome than either, this was provided by the "thinking people" in the progressive establishment: the chattering classes, with their Volvos and chicken chasseur. Just when you wondered what it was you admired about Mrs Thatcher, there was the Mary Warnock on the wireless, doing her down in that patronising way that marks the moral bankruptcy of the liberal intelligentsia. Oxford's refusal to grant the prime minister an honorary doctorate must have prolonged the allegiance to Mrs T of a good few of us for some years. Sooner or later, Oxford will try to make amends. I hope she never accepts.

Then, for a shorter stint than Dame Mary and Comrade Ken, but one of heroic intensity, we honour Arthur Scargill. Like Ken, Arthur succeeded both in tripping up his own side, and rallying his enemies at the same time. Well done, Arthur. And eat your heart out, Derek Haddon. For your own honour you will have to wait for Neil Kinnock's list.

Michael Foot's contribution is now sometimes overlooked. It was less spectacular, but through all those early, dark years of economic failure at home and cock-up abroad, Mr Foot never once failed to make the alternative look so much worse.

Finally in this section, our overseas award. An easy choice. True, Colonel Gaddafi was a strong runner-up, but he never really took Mrs Thatcher head-on, and so was never truly beaten. That distinction goes to Leopoldo Galtieri, who pulled a great political party out of a great political abyss. Recalling what the Armada did for Elizabeth I, Galtieri wins the Medina de Sidonio award.

The second section of our list is for people Mrs Thatcher genuinely hates, and who genuinely hurt her. First, then, our counterpart to the OB (Order of the Bath), the OAB (Order of the Acid Bath) goes to... let us wait. The New Year honours will be with us soon.

# The Kremlin colonels taste power

Bruce Clark in Moscow reports on the struggle leaving Gorbachev isolated



Alksnis: sophisticated and knowing how to appeal to the people

Twelve months ago it was possible to guess the next political move in Moscow by seeking out strident reformers and identifying their most radical demands — multi-party democracy, market economics, a looser federation. Today, if any players on the Soviet stage look convincing in the part of weather-vanes, it is the two men whom the radicals call the "black colonels", Viktor Alksnis and Nikolai Petrushenko. These are the parliamentarians in uniform whom Eduard Shevardnadze, the foreign minister, accuses of forcing his downfall.

As region blockades region, farm boycotts city, race fights race and shops cease to exist, the idea is taking hold that only one thing is worse than heavy-handed authority, and that is no authority. In Colonel Alksnis, in particular, the rediscovered virtues of authoritarianism have found an advocate who is considerably more sophisticated than most of the communist warhorses who have lumbered across the political scene in recent years.

Both he and Colonel Petrushenko are 40, both are serving officers in far-flung parts of the empire where Russians feel under threat from local nationalists. Alksnis is a lithe firebrand of an air force engineer from Latvia who thinks and feels like a Russian.

Petrushenko is based in Ust-Kamenogorsk, an appallingly polluted city on the Chinese border, where he works as a political officer — a job the radicals want abolished from the armed forces.

Both figured prominently in the anguished debate in the Congress of People's Deputies in March after the Lithuanian parliament voted overwhelmingly to reassert full independence. Alksnis argued, with the sophistry of a well-trained advocate, that the 41 per cent of adult Lithuanians who voted for pro-independence deputies had no legal or moral mandate to secede.

His partner in conservatism, cutting a blimpish, even ridiculous figure, dismissed the Lithuanians as "small children who have

become naughty in a large and strong family while their parents are doing a big and difficult job". These days Colonel Petrushenko looks anything but ridiculous. Amid intensified fears of repression in the Baltic states, his talk about leaving the Lithuanian children "without enough pocket money to buy ice-cream" sound sinister rather than comic.

Bearing the scalps of two liberal ministers — Vadim Bakatin, who was stripped of the interior portfolio two weeks ago, and now Mr Shevardnadze — Colonel Alksnis is positively triumphant. In his "victory speech" after the foreign minister stepped down, he emphasised the two issues well calculated to unite ideological conservatives and ordinary people: Mr Shevardnadze's alleged willingness to commit Soviet forces to fight Iraq and the genuine hardship and humiliation that is being suffered by Soviet service families as they return from Eastern Europe with nowhere to live.

Colonel Alksnis is the founder and prime mover of the parliamentary lobby known as Soyuz

(Union), which claims the loyalty of 20 to 25 per cent of the Congress of People's Deputies and the broad sympathy of many more for its aim of keeping the Soviet Union together. But his most specific proposals are voiced on his own behalf alone, and they reflect greater sophistication than could readily be found among ordinary Soyuz members who long for a return to orthodox communism.

He is too clever to imagine that there is any route back to communist economics, so he proposes that the free market be imposed by force of arms, as he says American occupation forces did in Japan after 1945. He has also proposed that elected assemblies at all levels be suspended in favour of a Romanian-style national salvation council, with wide-ranging powers. Although a communist, he would include the Communist party in a temporary ban on all political activity.

If these proposals seem fantastic now, then so would the ousting of Mr Shevardnadze have sounded only a few months ago. The conservative camp is now exuding

the same confidence in its ability to set the political pace that the radicals craved a year ago. Optimistic liberals reply to Colonel Alksnis's proposals as they do to the televised threats to suppress dissent issued recently by the defence minister, Dmitri Yazov, and the KGB chief, Vladimir Kryuchkov.

They question the feasibility of a crackdown throughout the Soviet Union by security forces which already look overstretched and demoralised and which are viewed in many regions with unmitigated hostility. Furthermore, they argue, if the conservatives get their way with Mr Gorbachev, or oust him, they must still contend with the formidable figure of Boris Yeltsin, who seems uncompromising in his determination to consolidate the Russian republic's independence.

Colonel Alksnis is at a relatively early stage in winning hearts and minds, but if his radical critics are to be believed, he speaks for at least part of the military establishment, including some of the generals.

If the political and economic crisis deepens, then the two camps may at some stage be forced to talk to one another, across Mr Gorbachev's head; and at that point the shape of a post-Gorbachev Russia may come into view.

# Innovation on a pagan base, but with a message for us all

Jonathan Clark draws together the many strands from many lands that make up our modern Christmas

Christmas, as Scrooge correctly observed, is humbug. The traditions of Christmas are growing stale. Worse still, we suspect that the traditions are not all that they seem. Some were invented, and not so long ago at that. Others were built on sand.

To begin with, it was far from obvious that the early church would celebrate Christ's birth at all. Celebrating rulers' birthdays was a Roman custom, initially rejected by Christians as pagan. Nor did Christians know the day of the Nativity, which was not recorded in scripture or in imperial records. Contemporary theories included November 17, March 28, April 19 or 20 and May 20.

Early Christians celebrated Christ's baptism and presentation to the Magi at the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6. Even this was chosen, according to one theory, because it was the day of the winter solstice in the Egyptian calendar; the Julian calendar, in use at Rome, placed the solstice on December 25.

It was the church at Rome that led in imitating pagan practice by celebrating Christ as a king, and by 336 it had moved his feast day to December 25 apparently to clash with the feast of the sun, *Natalis invictis solis*, the chief festival of the followers of the cult of Mithras. To Eastern churches, this seemed amazingly pagan. The Armenians refused to accept the new date, and to this day celebrate the Nativity on January 6.

Is Christmas essentially a pagan festival, or did the early church deliberately confront and defeat these pagan observances? The choice of date points to a bid for supremacy rather than a surrendering to influence. For theologians, the exact date mattered little; for the masses, the inherited symbolism of pagan festivals still carried immense weight. When the celebration of Christ's Nativity was moved from January 6 to December 25, the intervening period was coloured by the associ-

ations of the Germanic Yuletide and the Roman Saturnalia: hence the twelve days of Christmas, the old period of communal feasting at the winter solstice.

Puritans objected so strongly to Christmas because of the enormous pagan inheritance beneath which the Christian message was lost. So New England zealots delayed the American celebration of Christmas until the 19th century; not until 1836 did an American state first make Christmas Day a public holiday, and until 1856 firms in Boston sacked workers who absented themselves to attend church.

But it was the Americans who then took the lead in commercialising Christmas. Christmas cards are Anglo-American. Seasonal exchanges of greetings are much older, at new year the Romans gave each other *strenae* (laurel or olive branches) or small gifts inscribed with restrained legends such as "Anno novo faustum felix tibi sit"; but it was left to the English to sentimentalise, and the Americans to commercialise, an ancient custom.

"Santa Claus" was an American misunderstanding. He was a garbled version of St Nicholas, the 4th-century Turkish saint of whom nothing certain is known (or perhaps ever was), who yet inspired widespread devotion across Europe. Becoming patron saint of Russia, eventually equipped him with the reindeer. After restoring to life three children who had been chopped up by a butcher and popped into a salting vat, he not unreasonably became the patron saint of children too. Dutch settlers at New Amsterdam in America took him along in his Dutch guise as "Sinter Claes"; their Anglophone neighbours turned him into Santa Claus, a wholly secularised symbol of bounty and goodwill, a benevolent magician, the epitome, for children, of the gift culture.

In Catholic theology, gift-giving officially echoes the visit of the wise men from the East to the infant Christ, and their tributes of



SAINT NICHOLAS  
A FRENCH CHIEF IRAN SHA-DIER MR. CANTER, D

The Turkish miracle worker who restored three children to life, and now every December brings cheer to millions

gold, frankincense and myrrh. Some countries transferred this symbolism from the Epiphany to December 25 when that became the key date; others did not. Presents at Christmas used to be a characteristic of Teutonic societies; the French followed the Roman custom on January 1; Spanish and Italian adults exchanged gifts on January 6. Catholic children for a long time hung up their stockings on December 6, St Nicholas's Day.

Gradually, the Christian symbolism weakened. The link with the Nativity was never strong; and in the background was always the winter festival, associated with a gift-giver. Once he was Odin, riding the forests on his magic horse Sleipnir, rewarding good and

punishing evil; then he merged into St Nicholas, in bishop's habit, still with a moral role; now he is the scarlet-clad Santa, provider of indiscriminate largesse.

Most of the trappings of Christmas can be dated. The cult of the crib originated with St Francis of Assisi in the early 13th century. A carol was a medieval ring dance, later the dancing song, but most of the best ones are modern: "Good King Wenceslaus", despite its medieval setting, was composed in 1866; "Away in a Manger", though sometimes attributed to Martin Luther, first appeared in Philadelphia in 1885.

Mince pies date from the 16th century, plum pudding from the 17th, but the grand English dinner dish was a boar's head (the

legendary food of the heroes in Valhalla); turkey was unknown until exported from Mexico in the 1530s and only the New England puritans were austere enough to celebrate with that dry and stringy bird until it caught on from America in our own time.

Decorating houses with evergreens went back to Roman antiquity; Christians took up the holly and the ivy, reading symbolic significance into them, but banned the mistletoe, the druids' sacred plant. German settlers took the Christmas tree to America but it really caught on when Prince Albert had one set up in Windsor Castle in 1841. Dickens disapproved, calling it "the new German toy", but social emulation guaranteed its success, replacing the native kissing booth and its sprig of mistletoe — too erotic a symbol for the Victorian drawing room.

By its "bit our Christmas was invented. Historians who dwell on the "invention of tradition" are generally trying to... sneer: your practices are irrational imitations, my practices are rational and deliberate. Yet some of our most recent Christmas traditions are the most moving. One in particular — the service of nine lessons and carols from King's College, Cambridge, which dates only from 1918 — is the most successfully sacred in a resolutely secular world.

Despite the indelible pagan symbolism, there were strong theological reasons for making Christmas rather than Epiphany the major event. It was a way of emphasising that the divine element was in Christ from the first, and did not depend on his baptism, celebrated at Epiphany. More important still, it was a way of countering 4th-century Arian objections to the doctrine of the incarnation. Christmas was a triumphant affirmation of God's birth in human flesh: a sacred and secular celebration in defiance of those who wanted to elevate Christ into a wholly spiritual figure, or to demote him to the human level of a wise and good moral teacher. If so, perhaps our half-pagan Christmas has a role today, humbug or no humbug. The author is a fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.

## Redundancy blues

Staff at Conservative Central Office are bracing themselves for the worst after the announcement this week of a £4 million deficit in party funds. Chris Patten, the new Tory chairman, is expected to embark on a short, sharp exercise in cost-cutting in the new year, starting with jobs.

Those most vulnerable include the 50 or so employed in the research department. As 10 Downing Street runs its own think-tank, now under Sarah Hogg, much of the department's work is seen as duplication. Some of those controversially brought in by Kenneth Baker, the previous chairman, such as Dr Julian Lewis, who is joint deputy director of the research department, are thought to be in a particularly weak position. Lewis has made his career keeping tabs on CND, a key issue in the last two general elections but unlikely to loom large next time.

Another Baker appointment thought to be in danger is Fiona Souness (a relative of Graham Souness, the Glasgow Rangers manager), who has no political experience and is employed buying in outside designs for the party's campaigns.

The role of a third key Baker appointment, Richard Wirthlin, who worked on Ronald Reagan's two election victories, is also under scrutiny. Although he remains a key member of the election team, many Conservative feel the party can no longer

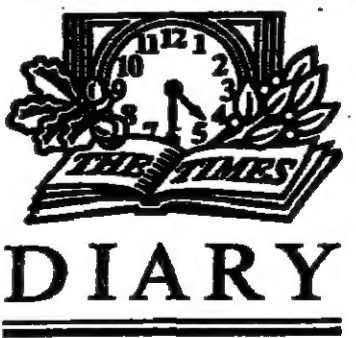
afford to meet all the expenses of an adviser who uses Concorde every time he flies in from New York.

All travel costs are likely to be reviewed, and like many another journal currently in jeopardy, the loss-making *Conservative Newsline* may be closed unless it can beef up its advertising revenue.

For once the Labour party has beaten the Tories to such cuts. It closed its newspaper and started to run down its research department long ago. Some might say it is ironic that these "Thatcher" cuts have to be made at party HQ only after the Iron Lady has departed.

John Major resisted the temptation to fly into Washington in style. The new prime minister, his wife Norma and entourage were offered a round trip on Concorde for a fraction of the standard £4,500 fare. How big was the deduction? "Cost price," says a BA spokesman, refusing to give a figure. Major, however, still opted for his predecessor's favoured VC-10.

Guest artist



Thatcher and the election of Major," says Barnett.

The play, entitled *The Other Robert and the 19th Province*, has a cast including a banker, an American, a Japanese and a homosexual. It is set on top of a dam, one of the sites where Barnett was detained. Macmillan has expressed an interest in publishing the play, and Barnett hopes that the Royal Court can be persuaded to stage it. Barnett says the play is a comedy, but admits: "There is some resistance to publishing it or performing it before the situation is resolved."

## Jangle bells

John Harrison, the BBC's chief political correspondent, has received a Christmas gift that many people would find bizarre: the keys to an African prison. The keys, attached to a brass plate inscribed "condemned section", are those of the Ugandan jail in which Harrison was locked up for a week by Idi Amin.

"I was arrested in the foyer of the Kampala International Hotel with several other journalists in 1972," recalls Harrison. "It was

during the explosion of the Ugandan Asians. We were taken to a prison in Makindji outside Kampala. We were badly treated."

Covering the invasion by Tanzanian forces seven years later, ITN journalist Mark Webster was in the prison when it was overrun and picked up the keys as a memento. Harrison says: "Mark and I were in Madrid together a few weeks ago and he mentioned the keys. He had no idea that I was once in that very same jail. Now he has given me the keys for Christmas."

● If you thought that estate agents' hyperbole had long ago reached its apogee, think again. Cambridge-based Bidwells, in a bullish report on the impact of the 1992 single market on property prices, declares: "As things stand, East Anglia is in the right place at the right time." How good to know there is no need to move it.

## On your icicle

To prepare for his attempt to reach the North Pole, Sir Raulph Fiennes immersed himself for long periods in an ice cold bath. His example has been followed by the Australian mountaineer, Brigitte Muir. As part of her acclimatisation programme for the assault on Mt Vinson Massif, the highest mountain in Antarctica, she spent two days in a frostbite-inducing freezer at Sydney fishmarket. Muir, a 32-year-old archaeologist, was accompanied by the four members of her back-up team, and hopes that after the 40 hours in the -30°C centigrade freezer, they will find Antarctica positively balmy. The assault on Vinson Massif is

part of Muir's plan to be the first woman to climb the highest peak of every continent. She has already climbed Africa's Mt Kilimanjaro and what she believes are the highest peaks in Australasia, Europe and America.



"It's plain hard work, not a bit glamorous. After my first climb I said it was the last. I have now said the same thing about 300 times, and no doubt I shall say the same after Antarctica," she says.

● A competition in The Bookeller to find the oddest title rejected by a publisher has unearthed some gems. One project submitted to Constable was entitled *The Good Food Guide to Nurseries*, which was not a guide for vegetarians, but rather a guide to eating facilities in mental institutions. The least promising project, however, must be a book entitled *Weeds of Wyoming*, submitted to Knopf. The book was politely turned down with a note to the author explaining that its interest was too local for a national publishing house. Undaunted, the author wrote back: "Would it help if the title were changed to *Weeds of Wyoming*, and Neighbouring States?"





1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### STALIN'S LONG SHADOW

In his lifetime, a light burned in the Kremlin all night, reminding the masses that "Stalin never sleeps". This week, one of the last remaining statues of Stalin was demolished in the last state still to claim him as its inspiration, Albania. Stalin is dead. But is he? Even today, the popular rejection of totalitarianism from Mongolia across the steppes of Russia to cultivated central Europe seems ominously insecure. The chilling fear remains that Stalin and his -ism cannot be toppled with a crowbar and a cheering crowd.

The warning of a return to dictatorship with which Eduard Shevardnadze resigned as Soviet foreign minister this week served to remind his countrymen that democratic institutions and the rule of law are not yet entrenched in the vast empire Stalin dominated for three brutal decades. That warning has relevance beyond the Soviet Union's borders. As the ethnic turbulence and border disputes suppressed by Stalin resurface in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe, rulers will inevitably be tempted to crush challenges to their power by the force of arms, even if they reject a single overwhelming ideology.

In Tirana, the dawn of Stalin's 111th birthday yesterday may have been full of hopeful symbolism. All day groups of Albanians watched the demolishing of the plinth on which Stalin had stood and wondered when the statue of Enver Hoxha, Albania's Stalinist dictator from 1946 to 1985, would follow. Their compatriots in the provincial city, Shkodra, had already settled the question. Once the authorities had removed Stalin's statue, demonstrators blew up Hoxha's. But the toppling of statues draws attention not to what is gone, but what lies ahead.

So long as the apparatus of terror remains intact in the interior ministries, the secret police and the militias, so long as the forces of Stalinism be reassembled. China since the massacre in Tiananmen Square may be a better guide than the rumour-mills of Moscow and Leningrad. There, the old men of Peking have closed ranks to restore "stability", in much the same spirit that the hardliners who sought Mr Shevardnadze's head now demand the restoration of "order" in the Soviet Union. Political repression in the name of revived Maoist orthodoxies has gone hand in hand with attempts to reimpose the certainties of a

command economy. Breaking with the instinct to command has proved phenomenally hard, as much in societies which apparently want to break out, such as Poland and Hungary, as in those which are still far from the democratic threshold, such as Romania.

In the Soviet Union, nobody might once have doubted the sincerity of President Gorbachev in his desire to move away from the centralism inherited from Stalin. Yet what is to be made of his apparent shift back, towards the "law and order" lobbies, the hawks of the army and the KGB? And what of his demand for greater formal powers than even Stalin possessed? Does it prefigure a return to dictatorship? He denies it, but Mr Shevardnadze apparently disagrees. Whom to believe? Even a provisional answer must depend on what Mr Gorbachev means by restoring order, what forces he enlists, what methods he chooses and what he does when - and if - he succeeds.

Mr Gorbachev's two tasks are to keep the Soviet Union's myriad ethnic groups apart and to move his stalled economy into market mode before the hardliners decide the time has come to move it back in command mode. He has the battalions: if not the Soviet army, which is having trouble merely shipping home its troops from Europe, then the KGB and interior ministry troops. But to deploy them courts violent rebellion, which would not only increase economic chaos but destroy his chances of reshaping the Union into a popularly supported confederation of semi-independent republics.

Only if he uses the powers at his command to force the pace towards political and economic freedom will the Soviet people regard Mr Gorbachev as the harbinger of hope. For whatever purpose he seeks them, the powers he now demands over the fledgling institutions of Soviet democracy are unashamedly Stalinist. They could be exercised by others, others who wish to mimic China in turning the clock back, to freeze time. Dictatorship is an -ism that will never die. It is the original sin of politics. Mr Shevardnadze may optimistically insist that a dictator could not now succeed in the Soviet Union, that "the future belongs to democracy and freedom". But did anyone hear Stalin's ghost chuckle in the Kremlin corridors?

### WHO FOOLS WHOM?

So who should be the man of 1990? The BBC shot itself uncomfortably in the foot yesterday by admitting that another corporation advance into tabloid broadcasting had gone sadly wrong. Voters in the *Today* radio programme's "man and woman of the year" competition had selected a leading Hindu politician as top man. Public relations experts know well that few listeners bother to vote in these contests, votes numbering only a few hundred. A well-orchestrated campaign can secure marvellous publicity from Britain's leading talk channel, which says it does not take advertising but, as every PR person knows, merely declines to charge for it.

For years, the same technique has been used by both political parties for getting their leaders "chosen". Local Conservative associations have ensured that Mrs Thatcher has regularly topped the woman of the year ratings. But this year (the Soviet embassy being too preoccupied to organise for Mikhail Gorbachev) first in the ballot was none other than Lal Krishan Advani, the Indian politician who heads the country's chauvinist Hindu Bharatiya Janata party. Mr Advani is famous in South Yorkshire's Hindu community, but the gilded souls of Broadcasting House responded to his massive vote with a collective "Who he?"

The mistake of Mr Advani's admirers was to fail to polish their PR. The method normally used to win this competition involves supporters being told to send votes in their own hand, as if spontaneously reacting to the daily pleas of the show's presenters. Mr Advani's supporters most unfortunately used standard letters. They also forgot, or never knew, the elementary precaution of using a number of

widely scattered post offices. Most postmarks were from Yorkshire.

The BBC seized on these lapses, accused Mr Advani's supporters of offending against "the spirit" of the competition, said he had not won after all and threw him off the winner's podium - for all the world as if they had found steroids in his urine. No such charges were brought against Mrs Thatcher, nor will they be brought against whichever British politician may now be promoted from second to first place.

The BBC has long offered free promotion to products pushed by the publishing and entertainment industries, though any mention of less fashionable goods or services, let alone of manufacturing industry, is fiercely censored as "advertising". Politics is normally considered acceptable, though minority points of view undoubtedly feel excluded by the big guns.

The Hindus thought they were doing no more than playing honestly at a good old British sport: coming a pug out of the Beeb. Getting their hero voted "man of the year" was surely better than rioting in the streets or making a nuisance in the House of Commons. But they reckoned without the British establishment at bay. Men and women of the year, bluntly, must come from a certain class, colour and group. No way do Hindu militants count.

The BBC should either declare Mr Advani the winner of this ridiculous competition, or admit that everybody has always cheated, abandon the competition and leave such nonsense to the tabloid press. The corporation has managed to fall foul of racism, chauvinism, commercialism - and Tory favouritism. And none of its producers even got an honour!

### PRAGMATIC THATCHERITE

The death of Michael Oakeshott this week at the age of 89, so soon after the departure of the prime minister whose views owed so much to his, merits more than a passing obituary. He was nothing less than the chief reanimator of conservatism after the long dominance of socialism over political theory in 20th-century Britain.

Oakeshott was a thinker broadly hostile to theory. His first widely noticed work was an essay fiercely critical of rationalism in politics which came out in 1947. By rationalism he meant an attitude to politics which called for a body of abstract theory to supply the connections required to achieve given ends by given means. He saw politics as the skill of protecting and adjusting customary modes of behaviour, learnt by experience and nourished by knowledge of history. As such, politics cannot be summed up in a set of principles like the instructions for assembling a television aerial.

"In political activity," he wrote, "men sail a boundless and bottomless sea; there is neither harbour nor shelter nor floor nor anchorage, neither starting place nor appointed destination. The enterprise is to keep afloat on an even keel... seamanship consists in using the resources of a traditional manner of behaviour in order to make a friend of every hostile occasion." There was naturally a stir in the academic world when, in 1951, Oakeshott succeeded Laski, the noted champion of abstract rationalism in politics, as professor of political science at the London School of Economics.

Oakeshott's Burkean emphasis on continuity set him at some distance from Margaret Thatcher. She has always been consciously radical, determined to sweep away the indurated and socially enfeebling practices of the trade unions, the Foreign Office (by the resisting aggression and not appeasing it), the education establishment, the health pro-

fessions, the lawyers and other sectional groups. Yet there was a convergence between them. Oakeshott insisted that the proper role of the state is not to protect the interests of individuals as such but to ensure that they, and the social groups in which they naturally and freely associate, can pursue their own purposes with a minimum of frustration. In this sense, both favoured a strong state, but one with limited agenda.

A less obvious service Oakeshott performed for conservatism was to make it more intellectually attractive than it had been for a long time, certainly since the days of the fourth Marquis of Salisbury. In the first half of the century there had been some notable, if not notably successful, conservative practitioners, Balfour and Baldwin for example. Doctrine was purveyed by archaic eminences such as Lord Hugh Cecil and Lord Hailsham. Oakeshott's conservatism was sophisticated and elegantly expressed, not the reiteration, however forceful, of conventional pieties.

Mrs Thatcher might seem closer to Hayek than to Oakeshott, who was less concerned than either with market economics and the pursuit of wealth. But where Hayek, in the spirit of classic liberalism, criticised central planning and the omniscient state on a global scale, Mrs Thatcher and Oakeshott had more a confined and local scope. The rights and interests that concerned them are the rights enjoyed and the interests pursued by the British people, as a result of a long and unique historical process.

Oakeshott's contribution to the conservative revival was thus to make its liberalism truly "conservative", to imply a planing of the rough edges from Thatcherism's radical agenda. Rarely are philosophers also architects of politics, but Oakeshott can safely claim his place in postwar political history.

### All at sea over shipping industry

From the President of the General Council of British Shipping

Sir, David Lipsey's views ("Save our ships", December 19), as always, make interesting reading. But it is wrong to suppose that because ships can be easily hired in peacetime, the rest of the world will flock to offer their services to us when the shooting starts.

The first lift of the Seventh Armoured Brigade to the Gulf was largely made in foreign ships because they were available for hire when most of our own were fully committed to their customers. Were the shooting to start, the situation would be quite different. Not only would our assets be available, but other fleets would, I suspect, disappear like snowflakes on a hot day.

As Mr Lipsey properly reminds us, the Indian government would not let its nationals go to the Falklands in 1982. Good and willing seafarers had to be put ashore and replaced by Brits. It is a truism that the only people on whom we can totally rely are our own.

No one is asking for "an entire merchant fleet" to be supported "just in case every decade or two a ship might come in handy". For example, should we ever need to put its plans into action to reinforce Europe in a hurry, almost every sophisticated ship we and our Allies possess would be pressed into service. Far from talking about "the odd ship", we are talking about the only transport arm capable of carrying the vast equipment and stores of modern armies across the seas. And the penalties for failure can be very high.

Finally, David Lipsey's entrepreneur quietly preparing himself to reinvest in the industry,

having sold out, is, I suspect, a trader in ships, not someone running and building a long-term international shipping business.

Yours faithfully,  
JEFFREY STERLING, President,  
General Council of British Shipping,  
30-32 St Mary Axe, EC3,  
December 20.

From Mr Robert Cowan  
Sir, If foreign subsidised fleets can undercut British rates we should gratefully accept. But the inevitable result would be not the decline, but the demise, of our merchant fleet, leaving our trades controlled from overseas.

The doctrine of always buying from the cheapest source, if extended to other industries, would imply the acceptance of subsidised and "dumped" goods, regardless of the consequences. The proposition might be more valid when applied to shipping if other countries, including some of our EC partners, allowed our ships free access to all their trades.

Mr Lipsey considers that defence problems can be overcome by chartering foreign tonnage, which is a dubious assumption. Even if owners were prepared to risk their vessels in pursuit of high charter rates, the agreement of their crews to sail into a war in which their country was not involved is highly unlikely.

Mr Lipsey concludes with news of a friend who made a fortune in - presumably British - shipping, "selling up shortly before the current recession began". It must have been a long time ago.

Yours faithfully,  
ROBERT COWAN,  
Rake House,  
Burton-in-Wirral, Cheshire,  
December 20.

### Future of Gatt

From Mr W. P. Niven

Sir, In his "Economic View" article (December 10) Anatole Kaletsky accuses Ray MacSharry, the European agricultural commissioner, of scuppering the Gatt talks in Brussels. Prepared statements by the US trade representative, Carla Hills, and the Cairns group join *The Times* chorus of blaming the EC for the collapse of these important talks.

Whilst I would agree that an economic trade war with America is certainly not in the EC's best interests, Mr Kaletsky's attack on Community farmers in general and cereal producers in particular is wholly unjustified.

True the CAP (common agricultural policy) in its current form has to be amended and the Commission is doing. However, the failure of these talks is, in my view, due in part to the US and others putting forward proposals which they knew full well were unacceptable by the EC Council and in reality were aimed at dismantling and even destroying the mechanism of the CAP whilst maintaining their own internal support.

How many of your readers realise that it is the Americans' main interest to ensure that their

surplus production is sold to Europe? When one considers that the Community currently imports 57 million tonnes of grains and other feed ingredients per year and only exports 30 million tonnes - the balance of interests is immediately evident.

On the question of subsidies, the Americans have a wide range of export credit facilities and domestic support systems, all of which are designed to maintain American agriculture and increase their share of world export markets.

I accept that consumers pay more for their food than might otherwise be the case if we operated in a totally free market, but experience to date shows that once any developed economy depends too much on food supplies from world suppliers the terms and conditions of trade, plus price, move rapidly against you.

Mr MacSharry has not been strong enough with the Americans and the Cairns group. Why should our producers be penalised and forced to take severe price cuts, only to allow the Americans to fill the gap in world markets?

Yours faithfully,  
W. P. NIVEN (Managing Director),  
United Grain Products Ltd,  
30 North Street,  
Ashford, Kent,  
December 13.

### Treasure trove

From the President of the British Archaeological Association

Sir, Your edition of December 13 contains yet another report of a coroner's inquest on a treasure hunter's find. The jury decided that a medieval gold ring, quite clearly of significant importance, was not treasure trove and could be retained by the finder.

Your report states that the finder, Mr Bobby Angus, intends to sell the ring at auction and quotes him as saying, "Any money we get is just a bonus because the real joy is that I have found a piece of history." This is the sort of comment we hear too frequently.

How can the justification for treasure hunting as a pursuit of history be believed if this ring, like the Middleham Jewel found in the same area and auctioned at Sotheby's for £1.3 million in December 1986, is to be sold at auction?

In the fierce competition of an auction how can it be right that national museums, let alone local museums, where so much of the treasure hunter's loot should be deposited, have to fight with extremely limited funds to acquire objects of national or regional importance?

I remain, yours faithfully,  
LAURENCE KEEN, President,  
British Archaeological Association,  
7 Church Street,  
Dorchester, Dorset,  
December 13.

### Shared church

From the Reverend Hugh G. Cross

Sir, A misunderstanding might result from the headline given to the article on the new city centre church in Milton Keynes (December 11). It will be clear from the article, correctly reported by your religious affairs reporter, that the church is, in fact, an inter-denominational shared church building, rather than a multi-faith centre.

Relations between Christians and people of other living faiths in Milton Keynes are good, but there is as yet no intention of sharing a building for worship.

Yours faithfully,  
HUGH CROSS  
(Ecumenical Moderator-elect),  
Milton Keynes Christian Council,  
4 Thurlstone, Whitechurch,  
Bristol, Avon.

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number - (071) 782 5046.

### Rights to roam the countryside

From Mr Michael Harwood

Sir, Both the title and content of your leader ("Rights of trespass", December 12), arising from the proposed prosecution of a Wiltshire farmer for obstructing a public footpath, give a distorted picture of the claims of walkers.

First, it is not just a "few" farmers who have shown a "cavalier" attitude to public footpaths. In recent years, footpaths have not been "actively defended and even extended" by those with legal responsibility. Quite the reverse.

Definitive maps show a network of some 140,000 miles of public footpaths. They may pass through farmland; but the farmer does not own them. They are as much a property right - a public property right - as the farmer's private property right in his land. And yet a detailed survey in 1988 by the Countryside Commission showed that "a family on a typical two-mile footpath walk... face a two in three chance of meeting an impassable obstruction".

This represents mass trespass by the farming fraternity on a grand scale. If public footpath rights had been respected by farmers in the past, usage of the national network by walkers might have been more dispersed, and today erosion of the relatively few overused paths might not be such a problem.

Secondly, walkers are not claiming "completely open access to farmland", but to be allowed to walk at large on uncultivated hills and moorland. Such access would not affect farming. It might affect to some extent the proprietorial sporting rights of a small number of wealthy people. But does a sensible European policy require a healthy workforce or a grouse mountain?

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL HARWOOD,  
Leeds Business School,  
Leeds Polytechnic,  
Vernon Road,  
Leeds, West Yorkshire,  
December 14.

From Mr Nicholas Lane

Sir, As a Country Landowners Association (CLA) member, I accept the law as it is in the Rights of Way Act 1990, and would want to encourage public access to the countryside along the definitive paths that have been there since the Enclosure Act.

But is this Wiltshire County Council prosecution just a little one-sided? While we, as farmers and landowners, understand our duties and responsibilities, it is laid down within the Rights of Way Act 1990

that the Highways Authority of the County Councils shall keep all paths clear from vegetation growing from the surface other than crops, that they shall signpost and waymark the rights of way, and this includes a duty to provide signposts where paths leave the metalled road, and waymarks where the Authority thinks it is necessary to help anyone unfamiliar with the locality to follow the route.

As a farmer and landowner, I warmly endorse this, but I do believe many county councils, my own in Norfolk in particular, have not carried out their duties. Furthermore, is a county council even equipped to deal with keeping the paths and surfaces in good repair?

### Court procedure

From Mr Christopher Ash

Sir, Professor Frazer (December 18) makes two unrelated points: in the first he queries the assinine habit of being asked to appear at court as a witness before the doors to the building are unlocked, and, in the second, he questions why the magistrate refused to allow a defence witness to give evidence because he had been present in court.

The answer to the first is, indifference, and to the second, incompetence. Courts are run for the benefit of the Lord Chancellor's department, not witnesses - let alone defendants.

Yours helpfully,  
CHRISTOPHER ASH,  
Wensum Chambers,  
10a Wensum Street,  
Norwich, Norfolk.

From Mr Nicolas Walter

Sir, You argue (editorial, December 18) that shopkeepers who wish to trade on Sunday should not break the law against it but should join the campaign against the law. Why not both? Every campaign against an unpopular law has been accompanied by both covert and overt breaches of the law.

This was true of all the laws which used to enforce the Christian observance of Sunday; and this last vestige of those laws has always been broken every week, for the good reason that some people wish to buy or sell on Sunday without either interfering with or being interfered with by other people who do not wish to do so.

Yours etc.,  
NICOLAS WALTER,  
Rationalist Press Association Ltd,  
88 Islington High Street, N1.

From Mr Stephen Colloff

Sir, If Sunday trading were to be de-restricted we would become one of the most uncivilised countries in Europe in our failure to observe a day of rest.

The government should present a new bill rationalising the present inconsistencies and, as in Germany, making provision for special licences for one or two Sunday afternoon openings a year before holidays such as Christmas.

Yours faithfully,  
S. P. COLLOFF,  
The Old Post,  
Inkpen, Berkshire,  
December 18.

Will it not have to accept the environmental land management services concept of the CLA and get landowners to manage their paths? When Baroness Trumpton, agriculture minister of state, said the Rights of Way Act would end decades of confusion, I believe she was misguided. As a keen countryside walker, even armed with an Ordnance Survey map, I am still embarrassed for the most part to walk footpaths for fear of straying from them.

Your report (December 12) and leader, given suitable publicity, will ensure that we involved in agriculture will get our paths into the right order very quickly. But how long will it take the county councils, who benefit from no time limit, to get the footpaths in all counties up to their required condition?

Yours faithfully,  
N. A. LANE,  
Margaretta House,  
Clenchworth,  
Kings Lynn, Norfolk,  
December 13.

From the Chairman of the British Horse Society

Sir, What a pleasure to read a leading article highlighting the manner of access to the countryside. This society is of the opinion that the existing system of bridleways and other rights of way available to equestrians is, as the Countryside Commission found, fragmented and requires additions so that ways may be connected to provide reasonable lengths of ride.

Otherwise, with some notable exceptions, the system should be adequate for recreational riding needs. Where requirements for extra access do exist there are good procedures which if correctly followed could result in landowners making paths available.

However, a large number of existing bridleways (and other rights of way) are blocked or in some way impassable. If these were cleared, pressure for an overall increase in public rights of way might be eased.

This society has designated 1991 as the Year of the Arrow (Access and Riding Rights of Way), which will seek to identify a series of connected bridleways and other routes in each county. All our members are being asked to help with the project, in which we also hope to work closely with county and other authorities.

Yours faithfully,  
E. A. T. BONNOR-MAURICE,  
Chairman,  
British Horse Society,  
British Equestrian Centre,  
Stoneleigh,  
Kenilworth, Warwickshire,  
December 14.

From Mr Vere C. James

Sir, A further argument for multiplying public footpaths across farmland, as well as maintaining those which already exist, is the growing impracticability of walking along country roads and lanes. Walkers, or pedestrians as we are now described, are frequently regarded as trespassers by motorists and treated accordingly.

Yours faithfully,  
VERE C. JAMES,  
Glenwood House Cottage,  
Long Burton,  
Sherborne, Dorset,  
December 13.

### Road congestion

From Mr Frank West-Oram

Sir, Mr J. B. Robinson's proposal (December 14) to raise the motorway speed limit to 90mph - to reduce congestion - ignores safety considerations and is apparently based on motoring folklore rather than on fundamental principles.

What is needed to increase occupancy of the first lane is effective enforcement of the existing 70mph limit or of a lower limit as in enlightened countries such as Denmark, Japan and the USA.

This would minimise overtaking and thereby ensure that all lanes were utilised effectively, also improve safety with perfectly adequate mobility and give the bonus of reduced emissions.

Yours faithfully,  
FRANK WEST-ORAM,  
161 Chester Road,  
Northwich,  
Cheshire,  
December 15.

### Wanted: organists

From Dr K. F. Mole

Sir, The Reverend Edward Underhill (December 13) is in harmony with organists. I left my last job as organist because of Sunday slavery. My new job at All Saints, Kingston Magna, Dorset, involves three or four services a month. Three other churches in neighbouring villages keep our vicar fully occupied and three other part-time organists lucky to have an instrument to play on.

Yours faithfully,  
KENNETH F. MOLE,  
The School,  
Buckhorn Weston,  
Gillingham, Dorset,  
December 13.

### Age discrimination

From Mr Jeremy Paxman

Sir, The ageing of the Lord Chancellor's department (John Stanley's letter, December 12) is curiously discriminatory. Ordinary members of the public are considered too old to sit on a jury over the age of 70. High Court judges can continue to sit on the bench until they are 75.

Yours etc.,  
JEREMY PAXMAN,  
c/o David Higham Associates,  
5-12 Lower John Street,  
Golden Square, W1.











# Ready, set, go for a bright bargain



Well suited: pink and blue tweed jacket, £75 (£515). Aquascutum, 100 Regent Street, W1. Blue Harris tweed skirt, £69 (£599), Fenwick, 63 New Bond Street, W1

The sales are about to begin, and fashion followers are in for a treat, Liz Smith reports

The fashion pundits predicted that bright colours would be the rage this winter. They seem to have been wrong. The customers played safe and spent their money on classic shades, so the winter sales will be a colourful sight. For anyone with an eye for vivid green swing coats and hot pink cashmere sweaters, there are bargains to be found.

At Jaeger, whose sale starts on Thursday, a neat, double-breasted wool jacket in red, orange, pink or purple is down from £169 to £109. A black wool skirt that works with any of those bright colours is down from £79 to £49.

Jaeger has lots of bright blue and fuchsia pink cashmere in Regent Street and selected branches around the country. A turtleneck cashmere sweater is marked down from £169 to £119; the roll-neck style, £179 to £129; crew-neck, £159 to £119; and a cardigan with gold filigree buttons, £225 to £149. Selfridges will turn the opening day of its sale (Thursday, 9am-8pm) into a street party with a Dixieland band, and staff sporting red carnation buttonholes will dispense coffee to customers in the queue. Although bright colours have not been a stock problem, there will be good-looking bargains in Saint Laurent Variation pink, red or purple velvet suits. Single-breasted, with gilt buttons, they will be marked down from £355 to £223. A Variation black velvet skirt will be down from £149 to £99.

Because trade was brisk in men's casual clothes at Selfridges this season, racks of city suits will appear in the sales. Designer labels to look for are Byblos Beyond, Cerruti and Valentino, all down by a third, with a Saint Laurent suit, say, down from £285 to £185. Men's pure cashmere coats are down from £499 to £299.

The story is the same at George Arthur Dunn's men's shops

around the country. The smart new reincarnation of the Dunn chain has few of its chunky sweaters and cord trousers left, but good-looking suits for men are marked down to half price in the sale, which started yesterday.

The real bargain will be a neat jacket or a pair of well-cut trousers that give a new lease of life to something you already own. The going rate for the classic Burberry's weatherproof coat is £270 (for both men's and women's). In the sale it is £195.

Apart from Aquascutum's colourful pink and blue checked tweed suit, the best bargains at Margaret Thatcher's favourite fashion store are among the classics, most of them down by one third, but some by half. A pure wool coat costs £162, down from £325.

At Fenwick (Bond Street, Milton Keynes, sale Thursday, 9.30am-8pm on first day) prices will be cut from 20 to 40 per cent on classic styles by designers such as Paul Costelloe (own label as well as lower-priced Dressage), Nicole Farhi, Betty Jackson, Armani's Mani line and Synonym. Costelloe's perfectly tailored black wool trousers will be marked down from £119 to £79. A big, chunky Aran-patterned Farhi sweater in black or bronze will be £89 (from £129).

Most of the designer shops in Knightsbridge, now London's ghetto of international labels, delay their sales until the new year. MaxMara in Sloane Street will open its sale on January 2, with long, classic double-breasted coats in camel, navy, charcoal, brown or black, down from £515 to £370.

The sale in the Saint Laurent shops, at 137 Bond Street, W1 and 205 Sloane Street, SW1, will start on January 4, with prices down by 40 per cent. Caroline Charles's customers will be able to buy crushed velvet separates, suede



Cut-price girl about town: stone wool coat with fake fur trim, £119 (from £175), Fenwick, 63 New Bond Street, W1. Fake fur hat, £73 (from £98), Herbert Johnson, 30 New Bond Street. Suede shoes, £45.99 (£65.99), Russell & Bromley, 24 New Bond Street. Hair and make-up by EllisHelen

shirts, handkerchiefs and little silk cocktail dresses marked down from 25 to 50 per cent in her Beauchamp Place shop sale, which will start on January 3.

The rich colour and texture of a Georgina von Etzdorf hand-printed velvet scarf knotted around the neckline of an N. Paul

cashmere sweater adds luxury to the simplest outfit. Her sale (at 149 Sloane Street, SW1, and Pickett, 41 Burlington Arcade, W1) will open on January 3.

Mulberry's handsome quilted suede and tapestry bags and classically designed Scottsgrain luggage will go on sale from

Wednesday at Frasers, Glasgow, and from Thursday at Gees Court, W1; Liberty; Harrode; Harvey Nichols; Army & Navy, Guildford; and Jennens, Edinburgh.

Harrode breaks with tradition this year. Its sale will open on January 4, instead of the usual Wednesday start. Doors will open

at 9am and close at 7pm. Bargains in cashmere will include a two-ply, longer-line cardigan with round neck and gold buttons, from £200 to £145, and a roll-collar sweater, from £235 to £139, both in pale pink, natural, forest green, vicuna and deep rose as well as black, navy and white.

## LONDON

Army & Navy, Victoria Street, SW1 (071-634 1234), Dec 27-Jan 27. Selected La Crue items reduced by 20 per cent. A third off selected Donna Charlotte, Vaynower and Janet Roger Fleur and linen. Double-size Drifter duck-down duvets reduced from £89.95 to £54.95. Half-price Grosvenor silver-plated giftware. 50 per cent off George Butler cushion of silver-plated cutlery. 10 per cent off Stag, Duxie, G Plan and Ercol furniture. Hotpot washer/dryer reduced from £479.90 to £449.90. Berkens, Kensington High Street, W8 (071-637 5432), Dec 27-

## GUIDE TO THE SALES

Jan 27. Reductions as for Army & Navy. Fenwick, 25 New Bond Street, W1 (071-639 9161), Dec 27-Jan 20. One-third off Portmanteau "seconds" cookware and Darrington crystal jugs and vases. Reductions on selected kitchen items. Fortnum & Mason, 181 Piccadilly, W1 (071-734 8040), Jan 4 for two weeks. 25-30 per cent reductions on a range of china. Harrode, Knightsbridge, SW1 (071-623 8800), Dec 27-Jan 27. Reductions as for Army & Navy. Dickens & Jones, Regent Street, W1 (071-734 7070), Dec 27-

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Coltins and Hays Wadhurst and Dursella Chisham upholstery. Unmodelled three-seater sofa reduced from £710 to £550. 50 per cent off Lloyd Loom ex-showroom models. Half-price Pakistan Bokhara and Kashmir Indo-Persian carpets. Upright Japanese piano reduced from £2,895 to £2,395. Roland KR55 keyboards reduced from £1,795 to £1,395. Reductions on many fabrics. Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, SW1 (071-235 5000), Dec 27 for three weeks (open Jan 1). A third off selected Villeroi & Boch china. 25 per cent off Wedgwood Stoneware & Vine and Nautilus giftware. 25 per cent off Richard Ginori tableware and

Barnardaud Crèmebrûlée Artois Elzeu tableware. A third off Harvey Nichols silver-plated 44-piece cutlery canteen. 50 per cent off Emma Bridgewater bath accessories. Up to 50 per cent off Adrienne Vitardini bed linen. Selected hand-woven Iranian carpets and rugs half-price. John Lewis, Oxford Street, W1 (071-625 7711) and branches nationwide. Dec 28-Jan 12 (closed Jan 1). Wide selection of "seconds" in china department, including Wedgwood Amherst 10th plate reduced from £16 to £10.50. Reductions on saucapans, glassware and bed linen.

Liberty, Regent Street, W1 (071-734 1234) and branches. Dec 27 to end Jan. Imperfect Liberty print 157cm cotton fabrics reduced from £14 to £8.95 per metre. Sanderson cotton fabrics from £14.95 to £7.95. Perfect Liberty print 100 per cent cotton with fabrics reduced from £16 to £8.95. Indian handloom silk 122cm reduced from £15.95 to £9.95. Various Moroccan carpets reduced by half. Leather L77 swivel chair, Le Corbusier design, reduced from £610 to £549. Furniture available in London stores only.

Peter Jones, Sloane Street, SW1 (071-730 3434), Dec 29-Jan 12 (closed Jan 1). Reductions in glassware, bed and table linen and china, including Wedgwood Royal Lapis seconds; for example, 10th plate reduced from £21 to £10.50. Special purchase of Derby Imperial Blue includes 10th plate reduced from £5.75 to £4.45. Selfridges, Oxford Street, W1 (071-625 1234), Dec 27 to end Jan. Reductions in bed linen include half-price goose down duvets and Sanderson duvet covers. Up to 50 per cent off bone china (some seconds) from Royal Doulton, Minton, Wedgwood, Royal Worcester and Spode and also off Darrington and Edinburgh crystal. Russian Porcelain Bokhara rug, 19th 9in x 7ft, reduced from £4,750 to £2,375. Electrolux Imperial Blue includes 10th plate reduced from £5.75 to £4.45. Chinese super-washed carpets, 5ft x 12ft, from £1,895 to £799.

CANTERBURY Rosemont, St George's Lane (0227 766566), Dec 27-Jan 20. Panasonic M30 stereo camcorder reduced from £599 to £749. Sony KVX 2521 49cm colour TV from £499 to £449. Asco tabletop dishwasher from £299 to £259. Crichton Lynchurst three-piece suite reduced from £2,195 to £1,595. EDINBURGH John's Prince Street (031-225 2442), Dec 27-Jan 26. Hand-knotted plain carved Chinese rug, 2ft 3in x 4ft 3in, reduced from £79.95 to £40. 50 per cent reductions on hand-painted oriental lamp bases. Special purchase of Early's of Wemyss bed sets - double £18 and king-size £22. Jenners' 12-toy quick down double duvet reduced from £79.95 to £59. 40 per cent off Cathness discontinued lines, including crystal vases reduced from £35.95 to £20.35. KINGSTON UPON THAMES Bestall, Wood Street (081-546 1001), also at Ealing (081-567 3040), Wokingham (0344 31901), Bracknell (0344 42478), Tunbridge Wells (0892 25222), Tonbridge (0732 71177), Jan 3-Feb 2. Reductions in all departments. Half off marked sale prices on Elzeu Cross Day, Feb 2.

## INTERIORS

Case Fine, 132 Notting Hill Gate, London W11 (071-221 9112); 9 Central Avenue, The Market, Covent Garden, London WC2 (071-636 0299); 3 Broad Street, Bath (0225 48072); 38 Regent Street, Leamington Spa (0926 424926); 9 Little Clarendon Street, Oxford (0865 512502). Jan 10 to end Jan. Half-price ceramics, furniture, lighting and lamp shades. Corner Shop, 81 Fulham Road, London SW3 (071-689 7401), Jan 12-19. Reductions of up to 30 per cent on upholstery and 20 per cent on china and glass.

## FURNITURE

Black Stone, 330 King Street, London W6 (081-741 5022), Jan 2 to end of Jan. 20 per cent off selected models, and 10-15 per cent off the range of ergonomically designed seating and furniture. Furniture Store, 35-37 Church Street, London W8 (071-723 2779), Dec 27 for two weeks (closed Jan 1). Up to 30 per cent off Arts & Crafts and art deco furniture. Simon Horn Furniture, 117-121 Wandsworth Bridge Road, London SW6 (071-731 1279), Jan 2. 31.10 per cent off furniture and rugs ordered in January.

Omaga Furniture, 27 Wrights Lane, Kensington High Street, London W8 (071-336 2617). Dalmatians Road, Chestnut, Hertfordshire (0926 28494); 21 Old Town, Stevenage, Hertfordshire (0438 72412). Dec 27-Feb 12. Up to £400 off selected showroom models and 10 per cent discount on new orders of made-to-measure furniture.

Town & Country Conservatories, 8-9 Murray Street, London NW1 (071-753 0536), Dec 29-Jan 19. 20 per cent off all stock furniture and accessories.

## KITCHENWARE

Artisans Cutler & Kitchen Store, Victoria Street, Southwold (0502 724222); 109 Unthank Road, Norwich (0603 613999), Jan 14-mid Feb. 25 per cent off selected La Crue items. Cuisine Limoges porcelain oven-to-tableware, Sabotier ham and salmon serving knives and selected kitchen implements. Elizabeth David, 3 North Row, The Market, Covent Garden, London WC2 (071-636 9167); also in Nason of Canterbury, 48-47 High Street, Canterbury (0227 45755) and in Keddies, High Street, Southend-on-Sea (0712 600461). Dec 27 for six weeks. Up to 40 per cent reductions on selected La Crue items, 30 per cent off selected Applique china.

Diverdimit, 45-47 Wigmore Street, London W1 (071-635 0689) and 139-141 Fulham Road, London SW3 (071-581 8056), Jan 12 for two weeks. Reductions include 50 per cent off Triaxon hand-decorated tableware and 20 per cent off Italian Blue Gallia china (seconds).

## PIANOS

88th Street, 8 Berkeley Square, London W1 (071-730 5556), Dec 27 to end Jan. Bushner 4ft 11in grand piano reduced from £11,715 to £9,950. Bechstein grand piano from £28,345 to £22,000.

Astral Sports Superstore, Staple Corner, Geron Way, off Edgware Road, London NW2 (081-206 2156), Dec 26-Jan 20. One-fifth per cent off normal stock and reductions on ski wear, ski equipment, multi-gyms, rowing machines and gymnasiums. Libby's, Piccadilly Circus, London W1 (071-530 3151), Dec 27 for three weeks. Reductions of up to 50 per cent on selected items.

## SPORT

Wimbledon Park Road, London SW19 (081-780 2777), headquarters enquiries; 290 Battersea Park Road, London SW11 (071-545 0178); 59 New King's Road, London SW6 (071-384 2231); also in Bath (0225 445741); Tunbridge Wells (0832 20889); Newbury (0355 528016); Bury St Edmunds (0284 700465); Glasgow (041-332 6603); Edinburgh (031-220 4811). Dec 28-Jan 19. Large selection of designer furnishing fabrics reduced to 59.95 per sq yd.

James Churchill, 135 Sloane Street, London SW1 (071-730 6376); also at Liberty, Regent Street, London W1 (071-734 1234); St Christopher Place, St Albans (0727 602831); 13 Fitzroy Street, Cambridge (0223 323211). Jan 3-28. All wallpaper reduced by 25 per cent; selected fabric at £7.50 per metre; 40 per cent off bed linen, selected lighting and rugs.

Laura Ashley, 7-9 Hatfield Street, London SW1 (071-235 9787) and branches nationwide (customer enquiries, 0298 770345). Dec 27 for two weeks. Lighting reduced by 30 per cent. Country Cotton furnishing fabric reduced from £5.45-£2.45 to £1.99-£0.99. Chintz fabric reduced from £9.99-£11.95 to £2.99-£3.99. Wallpaper reduced from £8.95-£7.95 to £2.99. China and bed linen seconds reduced.

## CHAIN STORES

Allison, Northend, Croydon (0748 2577) and branches nationwide. Dec 27 to end Jan. Hitech camcorder reduced from £599 to £599. Half-price selected La Crue items. Vines 44-piece silver-plated canteen reduced from £149.99 to £79.99. Sealy Excellence king-size divan set reduced from £698 to £499.

Home of Fraser Sales at stores nationwide including Balfour John, Milton Street (0225 462811); Cardiff: Howells, St Mary Street (0222 21055); Chesham: Cavendish House, Promenade (0242 521300); Darlington: Berms, High Road (0225 402604); Edinburgh: Frasers, Princes Street (031-225 2477); Exeter: Divines, High Street (0392 68241); Gateshead: House of Fraser, Metro Centre (091-493 2424); Glasgow: Frasers, Buchanan Street (041-221 3380); Hull: Hammonds, Farnham Square (0482 29351); Manchester: Kendalls, Deansgate (061-532 3414); Milton Keynes: Deane & Jones, Acorn Walk (0908 66277); Newcastle: Blins, Market Street (091-232 8201); Sheffield: House of Fraser, High Street (0742 728121); Swansea: Dave Evans, Princess Way (0792 651525). Dec 27-Jan 27 (Dec 26-Jan 27, north of England and Scotland, closed Jan 1 and 2).

## SALES FRENZY: china at rock-bottom prices is a big attraction



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MICHAEL BOWEN







# How art took a hammering

**JANUARY Boom:** Sotheby's unveils Renoir's *Au Moulin de la Galette*. The painting, of weekend revellers at Montmartre, they say, may break the world record of \$53 million (£30.2 million) for art. Christie's announces slightly less ambitious plan to sell Van Gogh's *Dr Gachet*, a portrait of the tragic artist's homoeopathic doctor, at an estimated £22 million.

**Gloom:** A Bernini bust of Pope Gregory XV fails not only to break the world record for a sculpture but to sell at all, at Christie's New York, in the first disaster of the season. The estimate, of \$7 million, is scorned (retrospectively) as being too ambitious. Meanwhile, Alan Bond, the Australian entrepreneur who paid \$53.9 million in 1987 for Van Gogh's painting *Irises* (only for it to emerge later that Sotheby's had loaned half the money), admits he will sell for the "right price".

**FEBRUARY Boom:** Citibank expands its art buying facilities into Europe, encouraging owners to use their collections as collateral. Sotheby's has its best minor Impressionist sale in London, at £3.53 million with 12 per cent unsold.

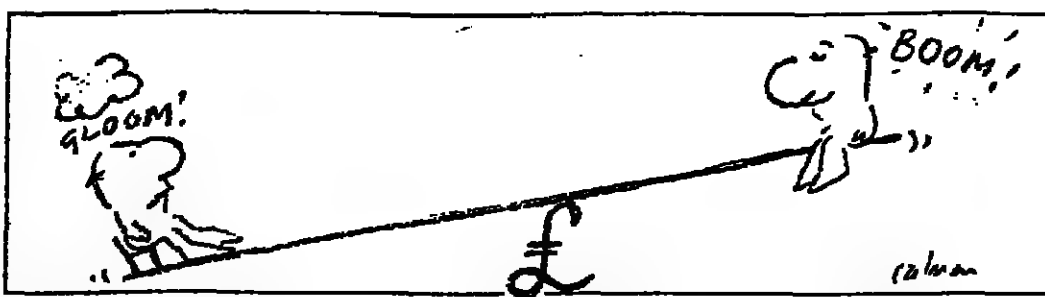
**MARCH Boom:** British artist Stanley Spencer hits the big time when his *Resurrection: Waking up* sells for £770,000 at Christie's to Bernard Jacobson, the London dealer. The same sale has records for Gwen John (£181,500) and L.S. Lowry (£104,500), leading to

speculation that British painting is at last catching up.

J.M.W. Turner's watercolour of Hampton Court Palace raises a record £473,000, and a 15th century Ming bowl breaks previous prices for Chinese porcelain at £815,000, Christie's Hong Kong. The market, according to the expert Colin Sheaf, is "red hot" and fuelled with Japanese and Taiwanese money. "They've got a lot of money and they are learning how to collect." Other records include £7.3 million for a Modigliani in Paris, and £1.76 million for two bathing beauties by Anders Zorn in London.

**Gloom:** Alan Bond sells *Irises* to the Getty Museum in a deal which is said to have lost him money. None of the parties concerned - Sotheby's, the Getty and Mr Bond - will discuss the price.

**APRIL Gloom:** Unprecedented failure rate for the London Impressionist sales. The total of £37.6 million for Sotheby's Part I sale compares with £68.8 million for the equivalent sale last year. A dossier purporting to prove the murder of the Russian imperial family at the hands of revolutionaries also goes unsold at Sotheby's London, in spite of an estimate of £500,000. But a



disastrous sale of Russian avant-garde paintings at Sotheby's, with 76 per cent unsold, is followed by an outstanding success for similar material at Christie's.

**Row:** Sotheby's gets more flak after announcing that it has become dealers to 2,300 paintings, valued at \$300 million (£187.5 million) from the Pierre Matisse gallery in New York. The plan is to sell them both at auction and privately. Anger from the trade, which says auctioneers should be agents, not principals.

**MAY Boom:** Stanley Spencer's record soars to £1.3 million for *The Crucifixion* at Sotheby's. Records include the £1.15 million for English silver, and £3.6 million for Pop art when *Kiss II*, a Roy Lichtenstein cartoon image,

sells to a Japanese industrialist in New York. The Christie's New York auction includes ten records for individual artists, but cracks are appearing, with 26 out of 77 lots unsold. Van Gogh's *Dr Gachet* smashes the world record for any art work at Christie's New York, selling to the Japanese paper manufacturer Ryoei Saito for £49.7 million. Two nights later, Mr Saito instructs his dealer to pay up to \$100 million for Renoir's *Au Moulin de la Galette*. He clinches it at £46 million, creating a super-sonic price structure for supremely desirable art works, and further confusing the market.

**Row:** The London dealer Leslie Waddington attacks auctioneers for "insanely" high estimates on the contemporary sales. "The

estimates are 50 per cent above my retail prices," he says.

**Gloom:** No buyers for *St Peter in Prison*, the first fully accepted Rembrandt to come on the market since 1986.

**JUNE Boom:** Record for a pink diamond when the Agra, reputed to have glinted from the turban of the 16th century Mogul emperor Babur, sells for £4.07 million (three times estimate) at Christie's. Lord Leighton's painting *Dante in Exile* just misses the world record for a Victorian painting when it is bought at Sotheby's by Andrew Lloyd Webber for £1.1 million. Buddy Holly's black plastic glasses fetch £26,529, a painting, *Boutique Fantastique*, raises the record for the Englishman Ben Nicholson to £1.21 million at Christie's.

**Gloom:** Thirty Impressionist works sell at Sotheby's London, but 39 do not. Lord Gowrie blames vendors who refused to lower reserves. Casualties include a classic pastel of dancers by Degas, which fails to sell at Sotheby's (estimate £4 million; unsold at £3.4 million). Best performer: Chagall at £1.98 million and £1.43 million. At Christie's 34 out of 66 lots fail to sell.

**JULY Boom:** Record for furniture when the Badminton Cabinet, removed after two and a half centuries from Badminton House, Gloucester, fetches £8.58 million.

**Gloom:** Sotheby's left to foot the bill when the star Old Master painting, *The Hare in the Forest* by the Prague court artist Hans Hoffmann, fails to sell. The painting, estimated at £2 to £3 million, was guaranteed, which means Sotheby's has to pay out a prearranged sum to the vendor.

**OCTOBER Boom:** A blue diamond of 19.41 carats fetches a record \$5.5 million (£2.82 million) at Christie's New York in a sale which is a Christie's jewellery record at \$31 million.

**Gloom:** Bad results coming in hard and fast, with 38 per cent of Christie's Hong Kong sale of 19th and 20th century paintings un-

loved, and 41 per cent of Sotheby's New York's Himalayan and Southeast Asian. Scandinavian paintings are given an 86 per cent thumbs-down at Sotheby's New York.

**NOVEMBER Boom:** El Greco's record soars to £1.69 million at Edmund Peet in Madrid, in spite of a heritage export ban. There are new records for European silver at £560,652, while Constable's *The Lock* breaks the world record for a British painting thanks to Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza's £10.78 million bid at Sotheby's. A Mozart manuscript equals the record for a single musical manuscript at Sotheby's, at £880,000.

**Gloom:** Elizabeth Taylor's Van Gogh, *The Asylum and the Chapel at St Remy*, shunned in London. Only 25 per cent of Christie's Impressionist offering sells, for a total of £10.3 million. Sotheby's equivalent sale raised £6.69 million for 39 lots, compared to £66.8 million for 78 lots last year.

**Confusion:** The Henry Ford II collection of Impressionist paintings, guaranteed at \$20 million, is a disaster, but the New York season picks up momentum.

**DECEMBER Gloom:** Forty-six per cent unsold at Christie's Chinese export porcelain sale, London; 44.4 per cent of Sotheby's Modern British unsold. Announcement of massive redundancies.

S.J.C.

## Going, going, gone...

The best of times and the worst of times: Sarah Jane Checkland looks at conflicting reports on the state of the art market

Lord Gowrie's approach to the art market slump was to announce the joys of which he is chairman, is building "exciting" new auction premises outside London. The plan, the former arts minister said with politician's guile, was part of a rationalising process for the Nineties. It took persistent questioning to draw out what he had left in parentheses - "that the plan, entailing the closure of Sotheby's two provincial outlets, Chester and Billingshurst, also meant 80 redundancies in Britain alone."

In contrast, Lord Carrington of Christie's went for heroic gestures of defeat when he announced his results last week. Following the halving of his company's turnover for the autumn season, from £675 million to £334 million, he said that 145 members of staff were being sacrificed to the common weal. The noble lord promised to fall, if not on his sword then on his salary, which he has frozen at £146,000.

Meanwhile, in direct contrast, a number of quality London dealers were reporting sensational returns for their current exhibitions. Seventy-five per cent of the Mui-wei jade exhibition sold within hours at Bluet, the oriental gallery; Eskenazi has sold 103 of its 141 Japanese lacquer items, for a total of £3.1 million. After two days, the running total for Trinity Fine Art's Old Master drawings at Harari & Johns was £750,000.

So what is the true state of the art market as we end 1990? Judging from the auction diary above, the year has been one of erratic performance masked by hype. Auctioneers focused our minds on the upper end of the pendulum's swing (in particular Van Gogh's *Dr Gachet* and Renoir's *Au Moulin de la Galette*, sold for a total of £95 million), passing briskly over the disasters.

The two big houses' glossy reviews of the year, just published, are good examples of the hype. In his introduction, Lord Carrington revels in the highs, with no mention of the flops. Sotheby's tome waxes lyrical about an auction house being "an expression of man's best hopes in sustaining that most ennobling part of common life we call civilisation. And as we have depended on those who created works of art, who gathered them, who cared for them, so the future depends on us."

Meanwhile, new markets such as Scandinavian and Belgian painting went down the chute. Fewer than half Sotheby's paintings of austere northern scenes

and ruddy bathing belles sold in New York last October; only 14 out of 72 Belgian paintings found buyers at Christie's. Impressionism - the erstwhile darling of the auctioneers, having provided 39 per cent of Christie's total sales last year - is in dismal retreat.

Elsewhere, the market is a minefield of conflicting evidence. Bennie Gray, owner of Alfies Antique Market in London, for example, still shivers through the lower end of the market this month by an open letter to the *Antiques Trade Gazette* saying: "Right now the antique trade at every level is going through what is probably its darkest period in memory." But Bonhams, his auction house counterpart, reported an annual increase of 24.6 per cent, to £23.3 million, with 77 per cent of items sold on average.

As for the Contemporary market: the disastrous auction results have virtually closed down the New York scene. In London, the Crucial, Cresser and Anatol

**The auctioneers blame Gulf tensions and the recession but, judging from the sales by dealers, the money is there**

Orient galleries have closed in the Portobello Road area, while Waddington Galleries on Cork Street has sustained three redundancies. Yet the Angela Flowers and Vanessa Devereux galleries say they are doing well. Both were rewarded by their initiative in exhibiting at the recent Los Angeles art fair, thus seeking out one pocket of the American market still going strong.

In general some categories, such as modern British art and picture frames, are wobbling but still capable of great heights while others, such as quality Old Master paintings and jewellery, are excelling. Witness the £355,000 for Ava Gardner's trousseau and the strong prices at Christie's Old Master sale on December 14, climaxing in a record £2.42 million for the Spanish artist Murillo.

The auctioneers may well blame the Gulf tensions and the recession for their gloom but, judging from the current sales by dealers, the money for art buying is still there. According to the dealer Giuseppe Eskenazi, recent events



Boom, gloom and dealer takes all: (from left) Stanley Spencer's record-breaking *The Crucifixion*, a failed Degas pastel, and a Japanese writing box sold for £350,000 by Eskenazi



have made the market "two-tiered", with deals continuing to take place between dealer and dealer, collector and collector, but by-passing the auction houses. Auction prices are, it appears, no longer an indication of the market.

Twenty years ago, the convention was for auction valuations to be 20 to 30 per cent below dealer prices, with the reserve (or lowest price at which the vendor agrees to sell) at 30 to 40 per cent below that. Recently, the insanity of speculation caused this to be reversed. As Leslie Waddington, king of London's contemporary art mecca, Cork Street, complained after last May's contemporary sales, the estimates had been 50 per cent above his retail prices. "We have a lot of amateurs over-estimating pictures at a time when there has been a tightening of money," he said. The short term meant unprecedented growth for the auction houses. The medium term is the present problem. Who knows what next?

The sickest investors must be the smart ones spurred on by the hype, who this time last year boasted how much they had paid for a given work, and now cannot sell on for love or money.

The happiest investors must be the British Rail Pension Fund managers who, having started collecting in the early Seventies, got out of Impressionism, Chinese ceramics and Victorian paintings in the past year. The fact that they have kept their Old Masters looks like further good housekeeping.

**BACK** in the recession of 1974, Sotheby's then chairman, Peter Wilson, cunningly lined up the British Rail Pension Fund managers to soak up all the unsold top lots. "If three of four other funds were to enter the running, an artificial price spiral would be virtually inevitable," *The Times* warned. With such investors trying to cool their charred fingers after the collapse of that spiral, who can Sotheby's turn to now?

The only people to make money from buying and selling art have done so through luck, not design. It is time to return to the old wisdom that art should be bought, not for investment, but for love.

to £1,000 budget, with clocks, furniture, pictures and books.

● **Sunday December 30:** The Brocante Fair at the Maltings, Ely, Cambridgeshire (04858 606) is genteel, offering rugs and samplers, furniture and china. Best offering is a brocade and gilt screen and matching firescreen.

● **New Year's Day:** The fifth annual Wimbeldon Antique Fair, at Southlands College, Parkside, SW19 (081-946 6593) has, from 10am, 70 stands supplying the usual carpets, rugs, silver, jewellery, as well as one offering fountain pens (next year's Christmas present). This is also the last day of the popular three-day Stafford antique fair, at Pavilion Halls, County Showground (0743 271444), starting at 10.30am.

S.J.C.



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### Antiques fairs

MEMBERS of the auctioneering and dealing worlds may now have sloped off for Christmas, but the situation is quite the opposite when it comes to antique fairs. The out-of-work actors and actresses and retired sea captains who form the backbone of this industry are dusting their wares in anticipation of the crowds, either seeking last minute Christmas presents, or looking to cheer themselves up after all that plum pudding and family rows.

● **Tomorrow:** A wide range of silver, porcelain, pottery, glass, and textiles ranging from £5 to £20,000 can be had at the fair in London's Park Lane Hotel, Piccadilly from 11am (071-794 3551). Up the road at the Sheraton Park Tower, 101 Knightsbridge (071-

603 0380), from 10.30am, there are more baubles in the form of jewellery and silver. From 10am, the Felbridge Hotel, East Grinstead, Sussex (0273 204836) has 65 eager exhibitors from the southeast offering a wide range of antiques. Prices from £10 to £600, including a selection of good early Worcester from 1765 onwards.

● **Thursday December 27:** The 80-stand Antique and Collectors' Fair at the Allendale Centre, Wimbome, Dorset (0590 677687) has much for the impecunious and childlike in the form of tinsplate toys and old wireless sets, at prices ranging from £5 to £500.

● **Friday December 28:** The Collectors' Market in Edgbaston, Warwickshire County Cricket Ground (021-743 2259) caters from 11am for buyers with a 50p



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# Comics are no joke: official

The rest of the world loves them; publishers say that we soon will. Joseph Connolly on the rise of the graphic novel in Britain

The cult of the graphic novel is in the ascendancy. The term is a rather pretentious catch-all for comic strip form aimed at young adults. Those with a vested interest in the importers of what tends to be a largely American product, together with the small number of specialist UK publishers — have for many years attempted to impress this fact upon the British consciousness. But now there is a willingness among mainstream publishers to commit big investments to the genre.

Allied to that is the evident eagerness of large bookselling chains to devote generous amounts of floor space to the increasingly large array of eye-catching — some would say garish — material. All of which has finally propelled this latest phenomenon to the forefront of book trade agendas. The big push to make comics for adults "respectable" is underway. Nevertheless, an uphill struggle is foreseen. The British, despite our rich heritage of caricature and children's comics, still seem to wrestle with guilt feelings that run deep when it comes to the comics, because comics are inextricably linked with childhood. Although it may possibly be considered witty to confess freely to taking both *The Times* and the *Beano*, there are not yet many adults catching up with the exploits of the Bash Street Kids.

The ingrained belief remains that comics should be either disdained from on high or guiltily enjoyed behind closed doors. Foreigners — and particularly the Americans, Japanese and French — view this attitude as typically British, predictably moribund and perfectly mad. In America adulation of cartoon characters and comics has long been a way of life (the fan clubs for Batman and Superman boasting more members than the Conservative Party in this country), and in Japan graphic novels outsell almost everything. France has built the world's first museum devoted to animation and comic book art at Angoulême, and French appetite for the new-style graphic novel is said to be insatiable — due in part, perhaps, to their love for such antecedents as Tintin and Asterix.

All these countries treat the graphic novel with deference. Is there something about the British sense of humour that will not

permit us to take any form of comic remotely seriously? Ravi Mirchandani — the senior editor at Penguin in charge of the current programme of 12 to 16 graphic novels per year — is wary of the genre being promoted as "serious", but is nevertheless at pains to distance Penguin productions from the cheap pulp fiction that floods other sectors of the market. "We are certainly aiming at a more sophisticated audience — the sort of people who bought *Maus* in the Eighties".

Art Spiegelman's *Maus* — first published in this country halfway through the Eighties — is a shocking and extremely effective transposition of the Nazi persecution of the Jews, the characters portrayed simplistically as mice (see inset, left). It remains one of the most respected graphic novels, selling 30,000 copies to date.

What the book has in common with another classic — Raymond Briggs' chilling cautionary tale about nuclear devastation, *When the Wind Blows* — is that the deliberately naive medium is so at odds with the import of the subject matter as to underline its significance a hundredfold.

"This is the graphic novel at its best," agrees Mirchandani. "But we publish more commercial titles, too." The two graphic novels cited by most devotees as being the most revered and influential are Frank Miller's *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* (the graphic bestseller of all time, with sales in the UK of 75,000 since 1986) and the captivatingly drawn *Watchmen* (1987) by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons. Both of these are published by the leader in the field: Titan Books, which has produced more than 250 titles during its ten-year history. "We never print less than 10,000 copies," says its publicist, Nick Griffiths, "and sales get better as we get more shop space."

So who are all these people, evidently buying hundreds of thousands of graphic novels each year, at between £7 and £10 a time — when most of the book-buying public remain unaware of their existence? "A fairly sophisticated audience is what we have," says Griffiths. "People who respond to a quality package." This sounds vague, but it appears to be the market into which Gollancz — a publisher noted for its science-fiction list — is eager to tap.

"I have put an age to our buyers," says Faith Brooker, edi-



Future form for the Nineties novel? Single frame from the popular adult comic, *Watchmen*

tor of 1991's launch into the field, "but I suppose from about 17 to early 30s." Male? "Yes, I'm afraid so. It's almost exclusively male territory." Here would appear to be the stumbling block. Despite all the publishers' claims for sophistication, and the undoubted quality of the artwork, the titles with the highest profile are, with notable

exceptions, still little more than extremely long versions of the American Marvel and DC comics of the Fifties. Few originate in Britain, and virtually all seem obsessed with fantasy, caped crusaders and the supernatural, with a smattering devoted to the surreal, whose endings are so inconclusive as to be maddening.

But if we are to believe the enthusiasts, we are still glimpsing barely the tip of the iceberg. Soon, they say, every type of fiction may be presented in comic-strip format, and the genre will cater for every class, gender and age group. "Watch out for the graphic novel," warns Faith Brooker. "Its time has come."

## Broad strokes from the brushcut idol

ROCK  
Billy Idol  
Wembley Arena

CARTOON rock is a term often used when Billy Idol's music is under discussion. Is this fair? Never a convincing punk. Idol has responded to the demands of pop stardom with unbridled enthusiasm. Some people find his mixture of macho swagger, bombast and subtly confusing and so dismiss him for a lack of either clear seriousness or unchannelled stupidity.

His first British concerts since a near-fatal motorcycle accident were Idol's opportunity to reinvent his image with some local credibility. The Wembley stage set — inspired by the aesthetic sensibilities of a ghost-train designer, seemingly — certainly embraced the cartoon stigma.

A huge mechanical fist revolved and raised a finger: from behind a door, Billy appeared in silhouette and limped forward. Was the walking stick a prop or a crutch? Although he quickly abandoned it, his movements were obviously restricted. At times his stiff-legged pose was uncannily reminiscent of the late Gene Vincent (an Idol idol), another victim of a motorcycle accident. Such images from history, set alongside the rock and fairground iconography, are all a part of Idol's mastery of melodrama. Songs such as "Cradle of Love" from the recent *Charmed Life* album, or "Eyes Without a Face" sounded impres-

sive, but self-debunking asides from Idol or explosions of noise from the remarkable guitarist, Mark Younger-Smith, kept proceedings on a level that this audience — waiting to punch the air to "Rebel Yell" — would understand.

It must be said that Idol is not Pavarotti. He tended to rush his lines, and some songs were approached in a variety of keys before settlements were reached. But Billy's innocent charm transcended mere technical imitations.



Innocent charm: Idol

The decision to relate a long-winded story (the inspiration behind that attractive Fifties-style ballad, "Sweet Sixteen") about the building of Florida's Coral Castle could have been disastrous; instead, our gaze grew fonder. As kitch as Coral Castle itself, Idol played the image to the last ounce, yet behind the cartoon, an original musical brain was at work.

DAVID TOOP

## Jollity in Verona

THEATRE  
Romeo and Juliet,  
The Pantomime  
Finborough Theatre  
Club, Earl's Court

NEW Heritage Theatre Company was launched in September with a play about the childhood of the four Brontës. Before taking the work on a national tour, the company let its hair down with 80 minutes — no interval — of innocuous jollity by way of an end-of-term romp.

The star-crossed lovers of Verona, "Earls Court's twin town", are transmogrified into pantomime. Romeo is, of course, a thigh-slapping principal boy (whom Sally Dunbar's unwavering smile invests with either satirical comment or cheerful imbecility). Juliet is a frolicked bookworm mistreated by her wicked Capulet stepmother and clownish step brothers, Paris and Tibby. Nurse is a female dame (Kara Goodman), a fit north-country mate for Fairy Laurence (Colin Heber-Percy). He is not

much more efficient than his bardic original, but does at least engineer a happy ending. Graham Callan (director) and Fran Cooper (designer) worked wonders with the tiny space available. Bright flats swivel to provide scene changes; the eight-strong cast, including a Scottish policeman called McPloot played by a girl in a beard, goes briskly through its paces accompanied by Harvey Eagles on keyboard and percussion. All pleasant enough, if lacking bite: the show leaves one eager to see more in particular of Mary Harvey, whose Juliet hints at strength and thoughtfulness, and Samantha Spiro. The latter's rip-roaring attack as a Lady Capulet with blue eyeline and finger-nails puts most of the panto season's evil fairies in the shade.

MARTIN HOYLE

Boxing Day in *The Times*: Jeremy Kingston presents a guide to the best holiday shows for children; Geoff Brown reviews the new films opening that day; and Benedict Nightingale reveals his choice of the finest theatre production of 1990

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**THE SUNDAY TIMES**

**Del Boy's big break**

"The writer, John Sullivan, was, to put it delicately, terrified of my playing the character. He had only seen me as Granville, and he just couldn't believe I could produce the streetwise energy and toughness. ... I partly based Del on a guy I once knew in Plaistow. He was just like John's description — the coat, the sovereign rings, the accent you could cut with a knife. Extraordinary." David Jason, in *The Sunday Times* tomorrow.

**Huns exchange hell for leather**

OPERA  
Atila  
Grand, Leeds

DUSTY it may be, boring it clearly is not. The Royal Opera's Verdi opera earlier this autumn. Now, Opera North presents its rather sparker production, and has a hit on its hands.

Directed by Ian Judge (responsible for the company's highly successful *Showboat*), the production places its emphasis, perhaps inevitably with this director, on tongue-in-cheek flamboyance. Yet even Judge's most ardent supporters could hardly have anticipated the enthusiasm of the first-night audience when confronted by hordes of barbarians clad, not in the traditional hair and fur, but in leathers and studs.

There is something engagingly camp about Judge's conception, although the images are fierce enough. After all, the rampaging *Mad Max* bikers conjured up within the theatre are not dissimilar to those on the streets outside. But what redeems his imagery from being another angst-ridden

piece of social commentary is the humour he extracts. Yobs they may be, but his Huns are also endearing. Judge's willingness to embrace the vulgarity of the early Verdi idiom, and his implicit admission that putting ram-paging hordes on stage has always been a bit of a giggle, allows his actors to indulge freely in energetic hamming.

Striding and strutting, John Tomlinson's magnificently sung Atila becomes an engagingly dark mixture of bravado and paranoia. He heartily embraces cliché after cliché — striding down to the audience to make his points — and does it with an innate theatricality that brings us far closer to the essence of stagecraft than any number of cerebral anti-heroes.

Perhaps it is just as well, for in Karen Huffstodt's ferocious Odabella he has a formidable opponent. Clad in Madonna-style breastplate and wielding a sword at the slightest provocation, she is not so much the face of militant feminism as seductress turned warrior. Yes, the constant preening and posing suggest more the world of 1950s Rome. But the singing is such a fine combination of power



Formidable: Karen Huffstodt as Odabella and John Tomlinson in the title role

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- BBC2 : December 27th 7.45pm  
The Birmingham Royal Ballet:  
Hobson's Choice.
- BBC2 : New Year's Eve Live 7.00pm  
The Royal Opera:  
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**Just as fruity as ever**

OPERA  
The Love for Three Oranges  
Coliseum

THE chorus at the start of Prokofiev's manic opera is split into factions demanding different kinds of entertainment: tragedy, comedy, farce, poetic romance, unbridled grotesquerie. Well, Richard Jones's production provides them all in exuberant over-spill. This is laughter in the dark, a torrent of theatrical invention where hilarity tips over into nightmare and back again, a show whose energy and magic and smart performances and vigorous bad taste will appeal to anyone out of nappies. It was a triumph

when it was first presented by Opera North; it was a triumph for the ENO last year, and it is a triumph again as their 1990 Christmas show, faithfully revived by Tim Hopkins.

What also distinguishes this new run is the orchestral performance under Martin André. The sheer sound is thrilling: fizzing with brilliance, full of unusual richnesses (the case is made for Prokofiev as a composer of Ravel-like imaginative precision), rhythmically tight, and using discipline as a tool to screw up the savagery and the high colour. What one hears from the pit is as crazy and wonderful as what one sees on the stage.

As for the principals, many of them have been here before, but their performances are as wild and full as ever. Paul

Harry is buoyant as the jester who has much of the burden of the vocal music and of the plot, such as it is; Alan Woodrow is the valiant hero of a prince he leads to the rescue of the three oranges. The baddies are well represented by Donald Maxwell's loathsome, dripping, lascivious Leander, Anne Collins's bullish Clarissa, Phyllis Cannan's forceful Fata Morgana and Fiona Kimm's smug schoolgirl Smeraldina. Ross Mannon does her stuff as the beautiful, sweet-voiced princess the prince eventually wins; Annemarie Sand and Melanie Armistead are also delightful before they die of thirst. Only ticketholders will discover how this, and many other surprises, happen.

PAUL GRIFFITHS



CHANNEL 4

**6.00 TV am**  
**2.00 Mooloomouth.** The crazy gang of Nail Buchenen, Gabby Roafin and Andy Crane present a Christmas edition of the popular Saturday morning show. Guests include Ian and Wicky from *EastEnders*. Also the first part of a backstage look at the Mooloomouth Capital FM Christmas Party at London Docklands

**11.30 The ITV Chart Show.** The Vintage Video features the Alarm

**12.30 Poosh Frocks & New Trousers (r)**

**1.00 News with Sue Carpenter.** Weather 1.05 LWT News and weather

**1.10 Saint & Greaves.** Ian St John and Jimmy Greaves look at the fixtures list for the Christmas period and preview the big games tomorrow between Aston Villa and Arsenal

**1.40 Sportsmasters.** The second semi-final of the sports quiz

**2.10 Escape from Alcatraz.** A number of the world's leading triathletes compete to test their skill, stamina and courage as they attempt one of the hardest tasks of all... to escape from Alcatraz

**3.10 Film: Home for Christmas (1990)** Sentimental family film starring Mickey Rooney as a cheerful party thief who comes out at his work with a big smile and easy manner. But as he gets older his skills begin to leave him and he is caught red-handed trying to break into a car. Directed by Peter MacDonn

**5.00 Results Service** with Elton Wesley

**5.15 News with Sue Carpenter.** Weather 5.30 LWT News and weather

**6.35 Film: Pinocchio (1940)** Half a century after it was launched, Walt Disney's classic version of the fairy story gets its first showing on British television. The story of the wooden marionette, the Blue Fairy and Jimmy Cricket as one of the best cinema cartoons yet made, superbly inventive and full of charm. The film was five years in preparation and the famous scene in which Pinocchio's nose grows longer and longer and turns into a bird's nest took the Disney animators nine months to prepare. The song "When You Wish Upon A Star" won an Oscar. With the voices of Dick Jones, Cliff Edwards and Christian Rub. Directed by Ben Sharpsteen and Hamilton Luske. (Oracle)

**7.10 Blind Date.** Celia Skok and a raucous audience attempt to help some budding actors find their perfect partners. (Oracle)

**8.10 Denis Norden's 21 Years of Laughter.** Denis Norden takes a nostalgic look at comedy shows made by London Weekend Television (r). (Oracle)

**9.10 News with Sue Carpenter.** sport and weather



8.00 Comic Book 7:20 TV  
Times. News reports from around the world 8.00 Transworld Sport

9.00 News 9.05 Channel 4 Racing: The Morning Line

9.25 Sing and Swing with the jazz stars of the Thirties and Forties (T)

9.30 Sing and Swing with the jazz stars of the Thirties and Forties (T)  
9.35 Difference. The show that looks at the lives and concerns of disabled people, with subtitles and signing (T) (Teletext)

10.00 Elday, Documentary tracing the lives of the sheep cliffs of Elday, the climbers in their attempt to scale the sheer cliffs of Elday, the volcanic island in the Reykjaness Peninsula, south-west Iceland

10.30 Film: Love Laughs at Andy Hardy (1946, b/w). The final adventure of the Hardy Gang. Andy Hardy (James Stewart), who left the army in 1936 (Andy Hardy (Jimmy Cagney)) is discharged from the army after the war and returns home only to suffer more heartbreak, this time from the vanishing of his fiancée, Sara Granville (With Lewie Stone, Fay Holden and Sara Haden. Directed by Willis Goldbeck

12.15 Animation. A Sense of Responsibility and The Sandcastle

12.30 American Football. Red 42 (I)

1.00 Christmas at Starcross. Starcross, a Catholic monastery in Sonoma County near San Francisco, supports itself by the sale of Christmas trees grown on its grounds. A few years ago, the monastery's founders look in despair, suffering from AIDS. This award-winning film looks at the commitment of the three adults to the children and how they try to give them a normal and happy Christmas

2.00 Film: The Smallest Show on Earth (1957, b/w). This engaging comedy begins as Peter Sellers double bill. Virginia McKenna and Bill Travers play a couple who inherit a dilapidated cinema and its run-down staff - Sellers, the drunken old projectionist, Margaret Rutherford, the Edwardian cashier, and wobbly doorman Bernard Miles - and night off plans to turn it into a cat park. Directed by Basil Dearden

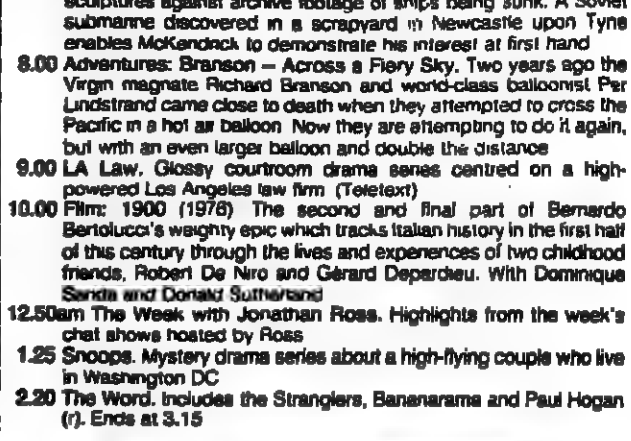
3.30 Film: The Mouse That Roared (1950). Second in the Sellers comedy series in which he plays three parts Grand Fenwick, the world's smallest state, faces bankruptcy because of America's imitation of its major export, wine. He plans to declare war on the United States so that it will be defeated and qualify for American aid. Lively satirical comedy, directed by Jack Arnold.

5.10 Brookside. Omnibus edition (Teletext)

6.55 News Andrew Tait's Christmas to go, among others, Dudley Moore

7.00 Submarine

8. CHOICE. Pegged to an exhibition now touring Scotland, Mark Littlewood's film is a portrait of the Clydebank artist and sculptor Tom McKendrick and his obsession with ships, particularly submarines. Born during the second world war, McKendrick was fostered by his father by the Clydebank shipyard. He witnessed the destruction which scarred the area for many years afterwards. He entered the shipyards at 16 and worked there until a government grant enabled him to go to art college. His work is vivid and accessible and attracts people who might not otherwise venture into art galleries. Littlewood, who is a film cameraman, matches McKendrick's work with his own. The film is a superb example of




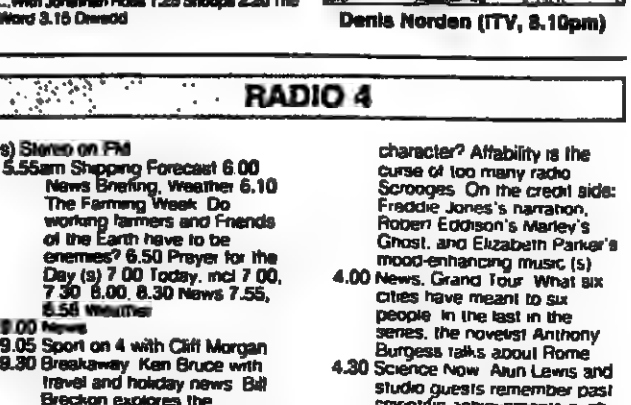
**Scouting an underwater observer: Tom McCandrick (7,000m)**

**RTE 1**

**Flora: The Greatest Story Ever Told** 5:30 To The Winners and The Hills Club 6:05 Free Angles 6:30 News 6:15 Reading 6:40 Talk Radio 7:25 Stop Time: The Night Generation 8:00 Stories 9:00 Father 9:20 Dates 10:15 Kenny Logg 11:40 A Matter Of Principle 12:40 News 12:45 Globe

**NETWORK 2**  
Saves: 12:30 News 12:34 Sports 3:26-5:10 Death Valley Days 6:35 A Christmas Memory 6:55 The Forgotten Place 6:55 Nasci 7:00 The Best 8:00 News 8:05 Recall On Bogan 10:05 Men: Creasance\* 11:50 Film: Live And Decor 1:30am Cops





enjoys the sun in Mauritius.  
09.00 **Louise Ends Christmas Special**  
**Sue Neal's Shopping Spree**  
**Carry on up for Cinders** The cast includes Frankie Howard, Jonathan Ross, Rory Bremner and Barbara Windsor (s)  
09.00 **The Year in Review** A review of the past 12 months in Parliament. With Michael White, Peter Jenkins, Robin Oakley and Andrew Marr  
09.30 **From Our Own Correspondent** Reflections of life and politics abroad  
10.00 **Jimmy Gok with Louise Reader** and Vince & Doug  
10.25pm **I'm Sorry, I Haven't 3 Clue:** The last in the series, chaired by Humphrey Lyttelton 12.55 **Weather**  
10. News  
10.10 **Any Questions?** From Duxton, Diarynne, Ben Bradshaw and John Deane Abba MP, Lynce Chabier, MP, Minister for Overseas Development, Shirley Williams, Professor of Economics at Harvard University and Germany Grebe (r) 1.55 Shipping Forecast  
10. News, Any Answers? 071, 580  
4.11 listeners can call Ben Bradshaw with their views on the issues raised in *Any Questions?*  
10.30 **Playhouse: A Christmas Carol.**  
C=CHOICE what's wrong with Christopher Davis's adaptation of Dickens's Christmas masterpiece? Is there too much Dickens? Why did the Dickens tell when it has already achieved a success previously? And why didn't produce John Winton let Michael Gough (Scranger) have a stab at the grating vocal role Dickens provides as the vocal key to the book and took ahead to the future  
5.00 **Staying On** in the Rhodoses. The best of three interviews with men who chose to stay on after Rhodesian independence. Lynn Tate talks to Norman O. 1.15  
5.25 **Week Ending (S)** (r) 5.50 Shipping Forecast 5.55 Weather  
6.00 **New Sports Round-Up**  
6.25 **Citizens Omnibus edition (s)**  
7.10 **Sio the Week (s)**  
7.45 **Classic Serial: The Forsyte Chronicles Edition 13** of a 23-part dramatisation of John Galsworthy's saga (s)  
8.45 **Conversation Piece** Sue Ashworth talks to Anthony Dowell, director of the Royal Ballet (r)  
9.10 **Musical Mind** Brian Kay with a selection of popular melodies (s)  
9.50 **Ten To Ten** by the Rev Dr John Santam (r) 9.59 **Weather**  
10.00 **News**  
10.15 **Hallelujah! The Chorus.** Producer Daniel Snowman was born in London with Phosphoric Choir work, and meets Sa George Sim, Bernard Haskin and Simon Patten (s) (r)  
10.45 **World of Paper** analogues of new writing, this week on the theme of suburbs (s)  
11.00 **Richard Baker Compares Notes with Christopher Page,** director of Gothic Voices (s) (r)  
11.30 **Steve Ross in Cabaret:** Recorded at London's Pizza on the Park, the second of four programmes featuring the New York pianist and vocalist Steve Ross with John Rzeznicek on double-bass  
12.00-12.30am **News**, incl 12.20 Weather 12.33 Shipping Forecast



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Major in US accord on Gulf

- SPORT 21-27
- RACING 26,27
- BUSINESS AND FINANCE 28-32
- WEEKEND MONEY 33-36

# SPORT

هكذا من الاعمال

## SUMMARY

### Capital plan



THIS week, the British Olympic Association (BOA) agreed to accept proposals from cities wanting to host the Olympic Games in 2000. The BOA will decide which bid to endorse before the final decision on the venue for 2000 is made by the International Olympic Committee in 1993.

Sebastian Coe (above), the chairman of London Olympic 2000, makes the case for London and outlines the benefits he believes a successful bid would bring. Page 22

## COMPETITION

### Prize words

ON CHRISTMAS Eve, *The Times* features the classic festive test of sporting knowledge, the Jumbo Sports Crossword. Our prizes include luxury visits to some of the great forthcoming events: an England rugby international at Twickenham, football at Wembley and racing at Cheltenham.

## SKIING

### Fast descent



PETRA Kronberger (above), of Austria, achieved her fourth victory in six races when she won the World Cup downhill at Morzine in France yesterday. Already this season, she has won slalom, giant slalom and super giant slalom races. Report. Page 25

## RUGBY UNION

### Return ticket

JEFF Young was appointed the Welsh Rugby Union's technical director this week. David Hand, Rugby Correspondent, finds out why Young has decided to return to the valleys and how he hopes to help lift the veil of tears which has shrouded Wales' national game for a decade. Page 25

## SPORT ON TV

### Viewing figure

WAS Paul Gascoigne really the sports personality of the year, as the viewers of BBC television decided last week? And if so, why? Laura Thompson investigates. Page 26

## FOOTBALL

### Tactical move



WHEN Steve Perryman (above) became manager of Watford, the club seemed bound for the third division. Since his arrival last month, they have played four games without losing. Clive White talks to Perryman about his methods. Page 23

## RACING

### Welsh hopes

BONANZA Boy, winner of the Coral Welsh National for the past two years, will carry top weight as he seeks to become the first triple winner of the race since the war at Cheltenham today. The opposition is headed by the northern challenger, Carrick Hill Lad, winner of seven of his nine steeplechases. Page 27

# Hunger for success remains Faldo's major inspiration



Putting on the Ritz: Faldo, winner of the Masters and Open Championship, with the trophy he received yesterday for being named the European Golfer of the Year

By MITCHELL PLATTS  
GOLF CORRESPONDENT

NICK Faldo yesterday took time off from the duties of Christmas shopping for his family, to make clear his intention to capitalise on his achievements, and specifically his successes in this year's Masters and Open Championships, to become the dominant golfer of the 1990s.

On receiving the Ritz Club European Golfer of the Year award in London, Faldo showed that, at the age of 33, his appetite for success is far from satisfied. Not only did he stress that he felt his best was still to come, but that he was willing to assist aspiring newcomers in order that the balance of power in terms of world golf remains firmly in Europe's corner.

"I would be quite happy to take one or two young players under my wing right now," Faldo said. "If they had the talent then I know that I could pass on so much information which would enable them to cut corners. Sometimes it takes ten years to learn this or that, and if I saw the talent in a player then I would like to help him achieve his aims."

Faldo, of course, has no intention of stepping aside himself. He unquestionably proved himself in

1990 to be the leading golfer in the world with his victories at Augusta and St Andrews. A third major title just ended him at the US Open, where he finished a stroke behind Hale Irwin, and he won almost £200,000 in finishing twelfth in the European Order of Merit. And, in Hong Kong last week, he characteristically destroyed the fear that physical problems might cast a shadow over his future when he put together a 62 on the way to winning the Johnnie Walker Asian Classic.

Faldo was concerned by the stress fractures in his wrists, which were most probably caused by his making a minor swing change which exerted a different type of pressure on his muscles. But he has been reassured by Paul Ankers, an exercise physiologist, that by taking the next two months off to work on strengthening his arms, he will remedy the problem which led to him withdrawing from six tournaments in 1990.

"I have learned a great deal about how to look after my body and I have no fears whatsoever about my future in terms of physical fitness," Faldo said. "That would not have been the case if I had not consulted Paul because I could have done untold damage by having cortisone injections."

Now I am convinced that with Paul's physical training programme I will start back in March fully fit. But I have no intention of playing the 32 tournaments that have become the norm every year since I became a professional. I want to cut back to 25 with the emphasis being on the major championships.

"But I am still as keen as ever. In fact, I am probably keener. I see now what is possible and I think that gives you the encouragement to go for it. I know so much more about playing pressures, and obviously the golf swing, although the incentive comes with what else there is to achieve."

"The grand slam of winning all four major championships in the same year is a human possibility. But you have to have everything right. You must be playing well. You must be physically well. You must be mentally well. You must have luck. And you must not have someone else blitzing it out on the course. But I am trying to do everything to ensure that everything is right."

"I am not thinking of winning three Masters in a row, although it would be nice. I am simply looking at the Masters in April as being another major. I will go to Augusta with the memories of the two previous wins, and if I could

have a Christmas wish then it would be to win the Masters again, or the US Open. I have come close twice in the US Open and at the very least I would like to win all four of the major championships before I retire. But I am not looking at going in to even semi-retirement until after the year 2000."

Faldo, too, remains emotionally enthralled by the Ryder Cup. "It's the fifth major," he said. "It has that kind of atmosphere. At Kiawah Island in September the Americans will have to beat us, and that will put them under pressure. I cannot see many new names being in our team which is why I would love to help bring newcomers through in the future."

"We must guard against complacency and against golfers playing for a living rather than playing to win. And I know there are golfers like that out there. They play with the calculator out. I guess I was lucky to have the attitude when I started out that if I won, the money would take care of itself."

There is no question that Faldo has reaped the reward of that philosophy. He has won four major championships and his annual income is in excess of £5 million. He will receive another £500,000 over the next three years

as a result of an announcement yesterday that he will represent General Accident, sponsor of the European Open.

Yesterday, however, was mostly about charity. Faldo received the Ritz Club Trophy, donated by Waterford Crystal, and two cheques totalling £4,000 on behalf of the Golf Foundation and the PGA European Tour Benevolent Trust.

## Record profit

Hampshire county cricket club has announced a record profit of almost £71,000 for the year ended October 31.

## Television dates

Derby entertain Tottenham in ITV's live televised football game on January 20. Manchester United's match with Liverpool at Old Trafford on February 3 will also be screened live.

## Italy's form

Italy, struggling to find form in the European football championship, face lowly Cyprus in a group three match today.

## Stewart's health a new blow

FROM ALAN LEE  
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT  
BALLARAT

ENGLAND'S cricket tour descended still further into chaos yesterday as Micky Stewart, the team manager, was admitted to hospital for tests on a mysterious numbing condition and Allan Lamb, the vice-captain, was injured while running back to the squad's motel in Ballarat immediately after scoring a fine 141 against Victoria.

Stewart's condition initially caused some alarm. A chest infection which had restricted him last week had given way to a lack of feeling in his right leg. An inveterate trainer, Stewart, aged 54, had been inhibited during the team's practices and eventually agreed to return to Melbourne to see a specialist.

Tests were taken in a private hospital and Stewart was also given cortisone injections, but the physician could find nothing seriously wrong and the manager was expected to rejoin his team today.

What he would find may not have pleased him. Lamb batted superbly against Victoria, having come in with England at 21 for two in reply to a declaration at 441 for seven. But in straining to run the five miles from the Ballarat ground back to the team's motel so soon after his innings, he repeated the calf injury he sustained on a similar run in Barbados earlier this year.

Lamb, the only man to have scored a first-class century for England on tour, was under treatment last night but is expected to play in the second Test, starting in Melbourne on Boxing Day, even if not fully fit — a measure of England's current strife.

England's recovery, page 22

## Eubank to face new challenger

CHRIS Eubank will face a new opponent, yet to be announced, for the first defence of his World Boxing Organisation (WBO) middleweight title at the Brighton Centre on February 23.

Kevin Watts, the originally named American challenger, is no longer considered a worthy enough opponent for the Brighton boxer by the WBO after being knocked out in his last contest.

Watts is rated the WBO No. 3 challenger but is listed at No. 24 by the more respected World Boxing Council. A possible contender for Eubank is another American, Doug DeWitt, who lost the title when knocked out in the eighth round by Nigel Benn in Atlantic City last April.

Eubank's defence in Brighton will be the first world title bout ever to be staged in Sussex, and Barry Hearn, the promoter, has said that two other contests in April and June should be worth £1 million to Eubank.

## Cricket nightmare 11 times over

SIMON BARNES  
ON SATURDAY

THE Team Nightmare competition reaches Christmas with a spectacular offering from Roger Dennard, who wins this week's ambrosial Calem Coltheas 1957 Tawny Port for his pains. He offers a team of cricketers on the basis of a single deed of historic wonder, no doubt in the expectation of them all repeating it when they play together as Team Nightmare. They line up as follows:

E. M. Grace, brother of W. G., who lost the match ball and nine spare ones;

Richard Edwards, who hit 62 runs off a single 11-ball over;

Ivan Hutchinsons, who batted 26 overs for 0 not out;

Eddie Hudson, who broke his leg, batted on and hit the final ball of the match for six and victory;

W. H. Brain, the only wicketkeeper with a first-class hat-trick of stumpings;

Pat Morrice, who can hold six cricket balls in each hand;

W. Yardley, who bowled alternate balls with alternate arms;

Alfred Mynn, who struck his long-stop on the chest with six consecutive deliveries, causing the man to spit blood for a fortnight;

Charles Kortright, who bowled a bouncer that went for six byes;

J. Bryant, who took 20 wickets in a match — all bowled;

and George Brown, who bowled a ball that beat wicketkeeper and batsman and killed a dog on the boundary.

A nightmare 11 times over.

**Hark the Herald**

THIS column sends congratulations to the Herald Cricket Club, which has come bottom of the third division of the Milton Keynes Pumps Cricket

**Peking duck**

J. A. Brooking, of the British Embassy in Peking, writes to me to correct the rough-and-ready Australian transposition of Chinese cricketing terms employed in this space last week. Thus, in correct Pinyin, cricket is *Ban Qiu*, bowler is *Tou Qiu Ren* and the batsman is *Ji Qiu Ren*. The Chinese cricketeer who plays for the Chinese Embassy in Peking is correctly called Wang Xiaodong, but he has adopted the *nom de guerre* of Bruce.

The recent televised exposé of betting practices excited the litigious propensities of Ladbrokes. I hear the Office of Fair Trading is also showing interest and is investigating six aspects of the programme.

## Oval gas drill

FAITHFUL readers may recall the construction problems that afflicted the Oval cricket ground this summer — a completely different set of problems from Lord's. The Oval was forced to delay the opening of the new cricket centre in the summer after they discovered a subterranean pocket of methane gas beneath the building. Eve Construction announces that it has released and dispersed the gas by drilling down to it. Things should be ready in the late spring and it hopes to have the Queen at the official opening in July.

## Grand-slammed

THE BBC makes quite a good thing of the way the BBC Sports Personality of the Year is selected: viewers write in and votes are counted. I confess I had always assumed that the other two awards, for Overseas Sports Personality of the Year and the team of the year, were chosen the same way. But no. These are chosen unilaterally by the BBC Sports Department. This, no doubt, accounts for Scotland's grand slam rugby team winning the team award. Unquestionably a magnificent team, its victory was watched live by a Grandstand audience of 3.7 million. The England football team's World Cup semi-final against West Germany was watched by 25.4 million, the biggest audience for a sporting event in British history. Oh, by the way, I wish the BBC good luck in all future negotiations with the sport of rugby union.

Baffling quote of the week: From Pete Carril, basketball coach at Princeton, preparing for the big game against University of Nevada. "We could get killed. We could get killed easily, but that's not going to knock me out of the box. It depends on how we get killed."

## High earners

I would like this week to salute the punters of America's National Football League, the token pacifists in the most war-like game of them all. These are the boys who, half a dozen times a match, take the field, catch the ball and kick it from hand high up in the air. These are the skills that allow Rhone Stark, of Indianapolis Colts, to earn \$415,000 a season. Sean Landeta, of New York Giants, makes \$325,000, two more punters make \$275,000, and two more make a nice round quarter-million.

## Season's best

WHAT is the point of running a competition if you can't break your own rules? This week I'm giving a second bottle of Calem Coltheas 1957 port to Robyn Williams, who offers Team Excelsior, a football team selected on Christmas and religious grounds. The line-up is: J. Priestley (Carlisle), W. Emanuel (Bristol City and Wales), T. Carroll (Ipswich and Wales), J. Gabriel (Everton and Scotland), J. King (Swansea and Wales), R. Paul (Manchester City and Wales), I. Allchurch (Cardiff and Wales), R. Hope (West Bromwich Albion and Scotland), J. St John (Liverpool and Scotland), J. Jordan (Leeds and Scotland) and T. Godwin (Leeds and Scotland). The manager is Noel Cantwell and the home ground is Vicarage Road, Watford.

Happy Christmas.

## ETHIOPIA 1984



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## FOOTBALL

# Arsenal prepare for yet another test of their character

By CLIVE WHITE

IT WOULD seem, on the face of it, that the last thing Arsenal would want this weekend would be to find themselves back in the spotlight. But knowing how well they respond to adversity, they will probably welcome the opportunity to demonstrate their solidarity to the nation before ITV's cameras at Villa Park tomorrow.

The imprisonment of Tony Adams for four months, dependent upon appeals or remission, for drink-driving offences is likely to have the same galvanising effect upon Arsenal as did their humiliation at the hands of Manchester United in the Rumbelows Cup last month. Liverpool felt the force of Arsenal's indignation last time; now it could be the turn of Aston Villa.

Villa were not about to succumb yesterday, at least not Stuart Gray, the captain, who likened the loss of Adams to that of Villa losing David Platt. "He organises them at the back and is a key figure in free kicks so they are bound to miss him," he said. The long-term effect to Arsenal could be more damaging than it will be to them in their motivated

mood tomorrow.

"We've had another big setback, but we are all determined to be positive," George Graham, the Arsenal manager, said. "The bigger the problem, the more positive you've got to be. We have a club record of 18 League games without defeat to set and we will be going for it."

Andy Linington, who has yet to start a game since his £1.2 million transfer from Norwich City in the summer, is included in the squad, but is by no means certain to take over from Adams, unless Graham is particularly concerned about Villa's height at set pieces. On Linington's one appearance as substitute, against Chelsea, Arsenal promptly conceded two goals.

Graham said that he had not decided who would be captain. "It doesn't really matter because such is the character in the side that they are all captains," David O'Leary and Paul Davis would appear to be favourites. Villa, who have plenty for which to make amends after one win in eight League games, are again poised to plunder the continental market. Jozsef Venglos, their man-

ager, visited Red Star Belgrade during the week and opened negotiations for a player believed to be either Slobodan Marovic, a full back, or Refik Sabadzovic, a midfielder.

Bobby Gould, the new Queen's Park Rangers assistant manager, found it necessary to travel no further than Grimsby to land his catch; Andy Tillson, a defender, for whom Rangers will pay £500,000 after a specified number of appearances.

Don Howe, the Rangers manager, has also taken Gould's advice and signed Darren Peacock, another defender, from Hereford United for £200,000. The pair are likely to make their first appearances tomorrow against Derby County at the Baseball Ground as Rangers attempt to avoid their tenth consecutive defeat.

Leeds United are on a different kind of roll - 11 games without defeat. Those seeking alternative viewing to The Match tomorrow have only to turn up at Elland Road where Leeds's game against Sunderland at Roker Park is being shown on closed-circuit television.

## Robson's return welcomed

By LOUISE TAYLOR

SEVERAL first-division players are poised to face their former clubs today. Paul Walsh would reveal in starting for Tottenham Hotspur at home to Luton Town, while Jimmy Case returns to run the Southampton midfield at Liverpool.

Similarly, David Speedie is back from suspension to spearhead the Coventry City attack at Chelsea; Dave Watson intends to lead out Everton at Norwich City, and Terry Gibson would relish a goal for Wimbledon against Manchester United.

United will aim to make a clean break with the past, however. In four League visits they have failed to win at Plough Lane, drawing twice and losing twice.

This afternoon's attempt to make it fifth time lucky in London SW19 is enhanced by the likely return from injury of Bryan Robson, the England captain, who is expected to make his first full appearance of the season, at sweater.

Gibson, who has recently returned to the Wimbledon first team after an arm injury, said yesterday: "I hope Bryan plays,

although it is going to make our defence a bit more difficult as he is a sweeper he may be up against me."

"Having been out for a long time myself I understand how he feels, and it will be great to play against him. It was always a privilege to play with him at United."

"I think Bryan could play in pretty much any position. He played sweeper once or twice when I was at Old Trafford. He knows the game inside out and will read it so well from the back."

"But I think he could still have another couple of seasons in the midfield, particularly at club level. He has come back from injury before so often and I know that it gets easier the more you come back. You get to know when you are ready to return."

"I think his age is irrelevant, really. Bryan was always the finest player at United when I was there and I am sure there is plenty left in him. Paul Gascoigne and David Platt have formed a good partnership in the England midfield, so perhaps the answer would be for

Bryan to go to the back at international level. He has won 87 caps, I know his ambition is to have 100, and I am sure he can do that."

With Wimbledon bolstered by four wins and a draw in their last five games it will be anything but easy for Robson - who may be required to tangle with John Fashanu, their formidable centre forward - and United.

Three weeks after Crystal Palace lost 3-0 at Manchester City last season, they invested £1 million in the goalkeeper talents of Nigel Marryns, from Bristol Rovers. Today's re-match between the high-flying teams at Maine Road will feature not one but two six-figure goalkeepers, as City include Tony Corona, their own £1 million acquisition from Watford.

Meanwhile, Sheffield United will be hoping for some seasonal generosity from Brian Clough as they seek their first League win of the season at home to Nottingham Forest.

Also facing checks, but are more likely to start Robert Hewer, McCull (stomach strain) is very doubtful for Everton, who choose from 15. Hinchcliffe returns to the defence for the first time since knee operation in October.

**Sheff Utd v Nott'm Forest** United hope to recall Marwood after injury. With Sutton not yet returned to match fitness, Crossley continues in Forest's goal. Hodgson has passed a fitness test on his calf and is a substitute.

**Tottenham v Luton** Mabbutt (thigh) faces a late fitness test for Tottenham; Tuttle or Thomas could deputise. If Allen is recalled to the midfield, either Walsh or Stewart would drop to substitute. Luton are expected to abandon their sweeper system, omitting Beaumont. Hughes returns from injury and Farrell could start in attack rather than on the bench.

**Sunderland v Leeds** Gabbidon (knee) and Davison (hamstring) face late fitness tests. Brady is poised to deputise in attack. Bennett plays despite a rib injury. Strachan is fit for Leeds.

**Wimbledon v Man Utd** Phelan (knee) faces a late fitness test for Wimbledon; Elkins stands by. Scates and McGee also face checks, but are more likely to start. Robert Hewer, McCull (stomach strain) is very doubtful for Everton, who choose from 15. Hinchcliffe returns to the defence for the first time since knee operation in October.

**Liverpool v Southampton** Beardsley (ankle) is very doubtful for Liverpool; Cousins, a young forward, is added to the 18-strong squad along with McMillan. Southampton are without Adams (thrust infection) and Osman (knee). Cockerill and Benni deputise in defence. Case returns to the midfield after injury.

**Man City v C Palace** Reid, Megson, and Heath all return for City, who name Clarke and Harper as substitutes. Palace add Clapham to the squad but there is no place for Hodgson.

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### WEEKEND TEAM NEWS

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Happy go plucky: Perryman (left) and his assistant, Peter Shreeve, look on the positive side of Watford's plight

## Bridging the Watford gap

By CLIVE WHITE

ACCORDING to Steve Perryman's memory, Tottenham Hotspur had lost their first six games and been knocked out of the League Cup by Middlesbrough 4-0 at home when he, as one of the reasons for it, was on the point of being sent to Coventry in a swap deal for Jimmy Holmes and Mick McGuire.

"The next day Terry Neill took over from Bill Nicholson and said to me: 'You're going nowhere. You're going to lead us out of this mess.' Perryman did and furthermore, during another 12 years at White Hart Lane as captain, led the club to numerous domestic and European successes.

It was an appropriate story to recount to the disillusioned players of Watford when Perryman joined them as manager just over three weeks ago. Their confidence had hit rock bottom and just about all of them wished that they could be sent to Coventry, too. "They were so disappointed with themselves. The look on their faces when they did something wrong. It was as if they were saying: 'Aaah, I made that mistake. Go on hammer me',"

"We've all had the confidence crisis. I have had it as a player and as a manager. You go down the shops, you get it in your ear, 'bottom of the league, lost again'. We've all had that ball coming at us from out of the air and thought: 'I'm going to miss this'. It's a question of how you get out of it."

Watching Perryman give a practical demonstration in his cosy, smart manager's office at Vicarage Road of how he helps players to "push the mistake out through your body by positive means" was a reminder that football managers have to be pretty good at psychology as well as housekeeping, public relations, scouting and the hundred other odd skills demanded by the job if they are to be successful.

Perryman, who was 39 yesterday, was forced to learn about most of them when thrown in at the deep end at Brentford where he succeeded Frank McLintock as manager within three months of arriving at Griffin Park as a vastly experienced player but a total novice in the "business" of management. "I would have preferred another year to 18 months as assistant manager.

Three managers removed from Taylor and a lot of broken dreams in between, comparisons with the past are no longer as uncomfortable or as unfair as they were for, say, Dave Bassett. Indeed, Perryman welcomes them. They are a reminder to him that he is working at a club of some stature where the English manager must have a name. Besides, Perryman is used to following in rather large footsteps, Blanchflower

The Watford that Perryman eventually joined was no longer the thriving concern that it had been under a dynamic young manager backed by an idealistic, wealthy young chairman. Elton John's interest had waned with Taylor's resignation and with £4 million in debts, the club had long since departed from the yellow brick road.

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They tell you how to start and how to play, explain the laws, language and etiquette, give a section to famous players and describe the game overseas.

An autobiographical introduction and well-chosen photographs contribute to an exemplary book of its kind.

The *Woolwich/Daily Telegraph Bows Yearbook 1991* (edited by Donald Newby; Pan Books, £9.99) does comprehensive justice to the sport, from the Commonwealth Games to sea-side tournaments, and from an update on the preparations for the world championships at Worthing in 1992 to short mat and petanque.

His job in cycling was to protect his team leader. He was a domestic, a water carrier dedicated to his captain.

He loved the professional game and knew of its reputation as a sport in which stimulants were used. But the youngster from Dublin had already made up his mind that he would be "clean" in all his races.

Often finding himself on unequal terms (he appears not always to have dedicated himself to the daily grind of training), Kimmage has broken the unwritten rule of professional cycling: his book lifts the lid on doping and spurs the strict law of silence among riders.

It was a long way from what I knew as a player," he said.

Perryman spent three-and-a-half years of "battling" at Brentford, often with the chairman, before walking out on them in pre-season. "I could have sat there and taken their money and cheated or left. It was a poor time to leave them but a good time in the way I was thinking."

He was scouting for Middlesbrough when the Watford job became available after the dismissal of the luckless Colin Lee who, coincidentally was not only a former team-mate of Perryman's at Tottenham but had also been his youth development officer at Griffin Park.

Then, for the second time in ten years Perryman was offered employment at his local club. Graham Taylor tried to sign him as captain when Watford were in the second division but eventually went for Pat Rice. "Tottenham had not fulfilled a promise to me about the longer contract and I would have come. I liked the image and I liked what they were doing. It would have been a different game for me. Instead of being a right back who knocked it into Hoddie, I would have been a right back who had to knock it a bit further. But I would have seen it as a long pass rather than a long boot," Perryman said.

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and Mackay as a Tottenham captain, and the double and push and run teams. "I have always paid great respect to what happened in the past. If there are good people here through Taylor's work that can only be a plus for me. There will be times when I will ask what would Graham have done. I mean, Graham Taylor was bottom of the league, I am sure, a few times."

The arrival of Perryman at Vicarage Road along with Peter Shreeve, his former coach and manager at Tottenham, as his assistant, will be seen by outsiders as a culture shock for those Watford faithful raised on a rather less fancy diet than that which has been the order of the day for so long at White Hart Lane.

But Perryman pointed out that Watford were evolving and that "it's a hell of an education for young players to come through a disciplined approach to the game". Rather modestly, Perryman describes himself as being "a bit of a workrate player".

Perryman appreciated that their arrival had coincided with a change in the club's terrible misfortune with injuries, for which he sympathised with his predecessor. Gary Penrice, a £500,000 purchase from Bristol Rovers, had, for instance, hitherto been unavailable all season to Lee. But their immediate decision to restore Glenn Roeder, the reserve team manager/player, to the first team in the position of sweeper has, they felt, been the most significant factor in the team's short but remarkable revival which could lead to them moving off the bottom of the table tomorrow if they win away to Leicester City.

Four games without defeat under Perryman is proof that a change of managers is not always the daft, desperate solution of desperate directors. Not so much because one manager is better than another, but because of the fresh impetus it can give to players. "You need surges in your career to pump you on again. People say that because I spent 19 years at Tottenham I was a loyal servant. It's easy to be loyal when you're straight in the side at 17. I got my surges from working under five different managers. The more surges we're looking to give these players."

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## PFA gives warning of a legal challenge

By LOUISE TAYLOR

THE Professional Footballers' Association yesterday confirmed that it was no longer prepared to support the Football Association's disciplinary schedule in its entirety, and is prepared to challenge the system of football justice in the law courts.

Introduced ten years ago, the schedule prevents "tactical" appeals and abuses the FA's overloaded administrative system. However Gordon Taylor, the PFA's chief executive, yesterday said: "With improvements in technology and the increase in video recordings and television coverage generally we believe there is now ample opportunity to properly and speedily assess the merit of appeals."

"We believe that the system of automatic penalties for sending-off cases with no right of appeal is against natural justice and has caused several miscarriages of football justice. The present system is further undermined by the FA's willingness to use television evidence to bring disparate charges against clubs and players irrespective of any or no action taken by the referee."

Accordingly, Taylor is prepared to challenge the FA rules in court as being contrary to natural justice. "What is sauce for the goose should be sauce for the gander, or else the FA faces its system of justice being challenged in the courts," he said. "It is against this background that we no longer feel able to support the present system."

In sending-off cases, Taylor and the PFA would like to see an automatic right of appeal within the 14-day period before the automatic suspension takes effect, where there is "insufficient" evidence, particularly television film, to justify such a review.

"We shall continue to press this point - which we have been pressing for the past two years - as we believe it is essential that this is introduced if the FA's disciplinary schedule is not to fall into disrepute because of the frustration of players, managers, and clubs where a clear error of judgment has been made by a referee. In a professional game and a multi-million-pound industry, referees should be as accountable as players, managers, and directors," Taylor said.

THE Scottish championship reaches the halfway mark this afternoon with two matches on the fixture card. Celtic will relish the chance of a relief by the events of the past two weeks. As far as the eventual destination of the title is concerned, the meeting at Ibrox of Rangers and Aberdeen is the most significant.

Until a fortnight ago, the two sides were separable only by goal difference at the head of the table but since then Rangers have extended their lead to three points. Aberdeen, travelling to Glasgow last night knowing that a defeat today would leave them with much to do.

Rangers add the lively young midfielder player, Robertson, to the 15 on duty last week against St Mirren. For Aberdeen, Irvine is available and Connor may be fit to play in midfield.

At MacDiarmid Park, Celtic will again feel the intensity of outside scrutiny as they meet St Johnstone. Despite speculation that Billy McNeill's second tenure as manager at Parkhead is about to end, the Celtic directors intend that there should be an interval of at least over the festive period. Elsewhere, St Mirren desperately require to make up ground at the foot of the table against Hibernian.

Stirling Albion have a tricky home encounter with Dundee United. Heart of Midlothian and Motherwell make up the card at Tynecastle.

Four games without defeat under Perryman is proof that a change of managers is not always the daft, desperate solution of desperate directors. Not so much because one manager is better than another, but because of the fresh impetus it can give to players. "You need surges in your career to pump you on again. People say that because I spent 19 years at Tottenham I was a loyal servant. It's easy to be loyal when you're straight in the side at 17. I got my surges from working under five different managers. The more surges we're looking to give these players."

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## ATHLETICS

# Britain's discovery of the year may go west to the US

By DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

ANDREA Wallace, British distance runner's find of the year, is considering setting up home in the United States. As she prepared yesterday to show once more this weekend that she may be a world-beater in the making, Wallace disclosed that she and her boyfriend have put their 12 West Country properties on the market with a view to moving.

Wallace, aged 24, has won almost every important women's cross-country race in Britain this year, yet 18 months ago she was a mother in need of a hobby. "I had to have something, otherwise it would have been just the children all the time," she said.

Running is now more a way of life than a hobby. She is the inter-counties and British cross-country champion and holds national titles for 3,000 and 10,000 metres. Britain's women athletes have been accused by Sally Gunnell's coach, Bruce Longden, of lacking ambition beyond the shores of their own country. That hardly applies to Wallace.

"There are people who are satisfied with fourth, fifth or sixth, but if I am fourth or fifth I brood on it for weeks," she said. And what was her reaction to having annulled the points she had gained for winning last month the first of 11 World Cross Challenge races this winter? "It will make me want to win every

one I run now," she said. The series, introduced by the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) this season to raise the profile of cross-country, was immediately criticised by Wallace. Because the first race in Bolton failed to reach the IAAF's minimum criterion of 12 qualified athletes, Wallace's 25 points were scrapped. "I don't think there is any point in doing the series," she said. "It is dead before it has even started."

Despite the IAAF's stance yesterday that there will be no immediate relaxing of the rule which says that points may be scored in a race only if 12 or more home field competitors participate who have equalled or bettered the fifth best performance in the world at 3,000 metres, 5,000, 10,000,

marathon or steeplechase (men)," Wallace has changed her mind. "I need some races because I have done the training and I need to be up against top-class competition," she said. The field in Ninove tomorrow is expected to include three good Kenyans, Jane and Margaret Ngitho and Susan Sirma, as well as Veronique Collard, from Belgium, and Uta Pippig, from Germany.

The series dictates that an athlete's best four races of the season count towards the championship, with scoring doubled at the world championship in Antwerp on March 24. A medal there will be Wallace's minimum target. After that a holiday in the United States "to see whether we like it."

A move is necessary because, living in Torquay, her nearest track is 24 miles away, and that is made of cinder. Her local grass track becomes a rugby pitch in winter, rendering it unusable in summer.

Furthermore, Torquay is inconvenient for travel to international competition.

Boulder, Colorado, the altitude home to a profusion of distance-running universities, is favoured. If the United States, yet to be visited by Wallace, proves undesirable, "the outskirts of London" is as she sees things now, second choice.

Wallace on the move

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## British sculptor putting Tyson on a pedestal



MIKE Tyson will be in two corners in London next year - his best, completed this week in a fondly at Basingstoke, will feature in two exhibitions, along with the best of Gary Lineker, which has also just been finished (John Goodbody writes).

Neale Andrew, from Nottingham, is seen here putting the finishing touches to the bust of Tyson, the former world heavyweight boxing champion, which evolved when Andrew was sculpting local boxers.

"The more I worked with other people, the more they began to look like Mike Tyson. He looks so formidable. He is like a sculpture in himself," Andrew said. The bust is two-and-a-half times the size of Tyson's head.

Although Tyson never sat for Andrew, Lineker had several sessions of two hours at a time. Andrew said: "Most sportsmen have trouble sitting still. But Lineker was very easy. He understood exactly what I needed."

Sir Richard Hadlee, Geoff Boycott

and Tony Jacklin are other famous sportsmen who have sat for Andrew, who has a single figure golf handicap and love of many other sports. His bronze of Jacklin occupies a place of honour in the United States PGA Hall of Fame in North Carolina, as does his bust of the late Sir George (Gubby) Allen, in the pavilion at Lord's.

The exhibitions next year will be at the British Golf Museum at St Andrews and the Fieldhouse Galleries in St John's Wood, London.

## HOCKEY

## Two-game Clark versus Southgate

By SYDNEY FRISKIN

JOHN Clark, who recently recovered from a hand injury, will have to hurry to keep goal for Slough this afternoon in the Foundation national league match against Southgate at Broomfield School.

Clark also plays indoors for East Grinstead where he began the senior division of the Bournemouth Indoor League at Crystal Palace this morning, with a match against Kyles starting at 10.40.

Matches between Southgate and Slough have always been rich in quality. Last year, Southgate lost to Slough after being twice in the lead, their hopes having been dashed by two goals from Barber at short corners.

Slough are at full strength today as are Southgate, happily reinforced by the return of Kerry and Nick Clark who were unavailable last week.

Both clubs are aiming to get back among the leaders and Southgate believe that if they beat Slough and win their postponed matches against Welton and Wakefield some time later they should start the second half of the season in February in third position.

Today's game between Old Loughtonians and Teddington is equally important. With Havant at the head of the table and Hounslow, the champions, pushing hard, the way is open for about seven or eight clubs to finish within the first four so as

to qualify for the League Cup semi-final.

Old Loughtonians will probably not call on Giamdian who has a hand injury. They are, however, playing with growing assurance and building up new patterns with Jennings playing at inside right and Constable at centre half. Barker, formerly of Teddington, will also be prominent upfront.

Teddington, encouraged by last week's 3-1 win over Welton, have stabilised their midfield with the return of Royce from his business commitments. McHugh and Egan will be at full backs and Laetel's influence at centre half will be a telling factor. Old Loughtonians have a

chance to return to the top of the second division table provided they beat Gildford, tough opposition if Knapp continues the scoring spree which leaves him joint second with Hill in the list of scorers with a total of 40 goals, one below Stuart, of Indian Gymkhana.

The Welsh international, David Carter, recently transferred from Ben Rhydding, will make his first appearance for Neston at home tomorrow against Ica in one of the two first division matches arranged for the day. Grimsby is also available for Neston. In the remaining match, Havant, at home, are expected to beat Wakefield.

Cambridge City have a chance to return to the top of the second division table provided they beat Gildford, tough opposition if Knapp continues the scoring spree which leaves him joint second with Hill in the list of scorers with a total of 40 goals, one below Stuart, of Indian Gymkhana.

## RUGBY LEAGUE

## Northern in danger if Hornets sting twice

By KEITH MACKLIN

NOBODY gave Rochdale Hornets the ghost of a chance of winning their Regal Trophy tie at Castleford last week. It was, everybody believed, a foregone conclusion.

Northern will be in no mood to encourage lightning to strike twice within a week in West Yorkshire. Northern would themselves have taken the Monday morning headlines but for Hornets' triumph. Trophies for the Wigan pack went to Wigan and tamed the Wigan six in such ruthlessly clinical manner that "the Wigan walk", the mass desertion of fans from the terraces to the exits, was happening long before the end.

All this spells danger for the underdogs, Hornets, today, with the additional threat of the powerful Welsh wing, Cordie, should the ball be allowed to go wide to the flanks.

One big threat to Hornets' hopes is the absence of their influential New Zealand centre, Mark Nixon, who last night appeared in vain against one-match suspension for non-payment of a £40 fine.

Bradford Northern must be favourites, but nobody will now discount Hornets' chances of reaching an important final for the first time since 1974.

The fortunes of financially-troubled Leigh suffered a further blow last night when two of their most experienced players, John Woods and Tony Cottrell, walked out.

Woods says he has retired, and Cottrell is refusing to play under the control of the present board of directors, led by Keith Bell, the chairman, and Jack Hart, the vice-chairman.

Earlier in the day, the directors said they were negotiating with a development company on building a supermarket at the Filton Park ground and proposals would be submitted to the local authority "in the near future".

If the sale of the ground goes through, Leigh will move to another site in the town and build a stadium. Supporters were asked to "be patient" and loyal.

Despite the dispute with players over non-payment of wages, a full side would turn out against Barrow in the second division match on Sunday, it was promised.

## FISHING

## Action plan to be put to the Test

By CONRAD VOSS BARK

FLY fishermen who have been complaining about the state of the River Test, England's premier chalk stream, recently attended a forum at Winchester to hear reports about the river from the National River Authority (NRA).

The NRA's southern region general manager, Grainger Davies, said: "The key to solving the problems of the Test appears to be better hydraulic management to maintain high water velocity during the winter."

First, cut weed in the autumn to encourage cleansing water velocities and stimulate spring growth of weed and slow the velocity and clarify the water during the summer.

Second, optimise water velocities by the use of simple, traditional structures to encourage cleansing of sediment. Third, begin to restore and build back the eroded banks so as to narrow the overall width of the river, thereby stimulating higher velocities and making the most of the available water.

Four, protect banks from erosion by cattle and from growth of clogging plants, such as reeds, which encourage siltation and erosion.

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## MOTOR SPORT

## Prost expected to sign an extended contract

By ALAN PROST

MARANELLO, Italy (AP) - Alain Prost, the former world champion who has been thinking of quitting Formula One racing, has extended his contract with the Italian team, Ferrari, until the end of the 1992 season, it was reported yesterday.

Ferrari officials did not immediately confirm the report, but a spokesman from the team said Prost was expected in a few days. Ferrari held an option on Prost for the 1992 season, until the end of the 1992 season, it was reported yesterday.

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## FOOTBALL

## First division

Chelsea v Coventry

Liverpool v Southampton

Manchester City v C Palace

Norwich v Everton

Sheff Wed v Nott Forest

Tottenham v Luton

Wimbledon v Manchester Utd

Second division

Barnsley v West Ham

Bristol R v Newcastle

Chorley v Hull

Millwall v Blackpool

Notts County v Bristol C

Oxford v Sheff Wed

Port Vale v Shrewsbury

Swindon v West Brom

Wolves v Millwall

Third division

Bolton v Cambridge

Bradford v Shrewsbury

Crewe v Southend

Exeter v Rotherham

Grimsby v Bournemouth

Huddersfield v Bury

L Orient v Crawley

Mansfield v Fulham

Preston v Stoke (all tickets, 11.50)

Swansea v Reading

Fourth division

Burnley v Hartlepool

Darlington v Chesterfield

Hendon v Southend







## RACING

[illegible][illegible]

1.28 (3m 2f ch) 1, *Corona* (S Burrough, 10-1); 2, *Ardent* (Sp 16-1); 3, *Boreen* Owen (9-2 fav); 15 ran. 8, 3. G Ham. Total: £19.90; £2.50, £4.20, £2.20. DF: £79.20. CSF: £143.66, Thrcast: £748.71.

1.6 (2m hds) 1, *Chamaelea* (J Lower, 100-30 fav); 2, *Reef Nautica* (12-1); 3, *Monseur Monse* (11-2). 18 ran. 3½, 2½, M Pipe. Total: £4.40; £1.70, £2.40, £3.00. DF: £24.90. CSF: £41.70.

1.28 (2m 4f ch) 1, *Repeat The Dose* (E Murphy, 8-1); 2, *Formula One* (15-8 fav); 3, *Strump Cup* (9-2). 14 ran. 8, 2½, T. Emenoghat. Total: £8.70; £1.70, £2.00, £2.00.

[illegible]

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# Foseco falls to Burmah in fight that went to the last round

By MARTIN BARROW

BURMAH Castrol, the lubricants group, has secured a surprisingly comfortable victory in its £259 million takeover battle for Foseco, the specialist chemicals concern.

Burmah declared the offer unconditional yesterday after receiving acceptances in respect of 33.6 per cent of Foseco for its 300p a share cash offer. This gave Burmah, which acquired just under 30 per cent of its target in the market during the course of the bid, a

total of 63.5 per cent. By mid-afternoon Tom Long, the chairman of Foseco, had conceded defeat and was meeting Lawrence Urquhart, his opposite number at Burmah, at Burmah's London office in Mount Street to secure "an orderly transition".

Mr Long said: "We believe we won the balance of the argument but recognise that cash is king. However, we would like to pay tribute to the numerous shareholders who took a longer term view and remained loyal throughout the bid."

Analysts had predicted a tight finish to the bid after a late rally by Foseco supporters to preserve the company's independence. Their campaign gained momentum when M&G Fund Management said it would support the existing management.

However, support was swept in the opposite direction after Phillips & Drew Fund Management and Hill Samuel sided with Burmah.

Burmah's successful offer represents an exit multiple of 11.1 times 1990 earnings, based on Foseco's own forecast

of 27.1p a share that was issued as part of its defence. Although some institutions believed the final offer was low — Burmah's initial offer was worth 27.5p a share — the majority voted in favour of accepting the cash instead of putting their faith in Foseco's ability to extract greater value from the business by disposing of several substantial assets. The day before the bid Foseco shares traded at 186p.

Jonathan Fry, managing director of Burmah, said: "We were all on tenterhooks because the outcome was decided

on the last day. It seems a lot of decisions were a close call. But in the end the margin of our success vindicates all our pleas to the market."

The takeover bid for Foseco was launched in October before Mr Long, a former director of BAT Industries, had formally taken over as chairman. He was immediately faced with the difficult task of defending a lacklustre record in a year when both profits and earnings were expected to fall sharply.

Charles Pick, the Nomura analyst, had anticipated taxable profits of £35 million

this year, against £46.2 million in 1989, with earnings falling from 30.3p a share to 21.5p.

After receiving negligible acceptances by the first closing date, Burmah increased its offer by 25p to 300p. Foseco's response to the bids was to offer for sale its interests in construction, chemicals and abrasives to concentrate on its core metallurgical businesses. The company pledged to pay a special dividend of 20p a share and to use the proceeds of the main disposals to buy in a large slice of its own shares.

TED BATH

## Pound firmer despite £971m trade deficit

By ANATOLE KALETSKY, ECONOMICS EDITOR

BRITAIN'S current account deficit narrowed last month to £971 million from £1.06 billion as imports of manufactures fell sharply while exports remained on a high plateau.

Although the trade gap was bigger than the £800 million market forecast, the pound rose encouragingly against a floundering mark.

The German currency continued to be hit by the political turmoil in Moscow, and the dollar, which benefited from worries about the Soviet Union, rose even more rapidly than sterling.

Nevertheless, sterling's ability to bounce back to DM2.85, after a low of about DM2.85 on Wednesday, revived hopes that the pound might finally have reached a sustainable level in the European exchange-rate mechanism. A period of exchange rate stability has been established by government officials as the main precondition for an interest rate cut.

The cumulative current account deficit for the first 11 months of the year was £14.96 billion, suggesting that the Treasury's 1990 deficit forecast of £15.5 billion, published less than two months ago, is likely to be missed, albeit by a small margin. However, next year's forecast of £11 billion could prove more realistic, since it would imply virtually no further improvement in the trade performance.

Gordon Brown, Labour's trade and industry spokes-

man, said the data had "economic failure" written all over them. "The figures mark a poor end to one of the worst years in Britain's trading history."

November's visible trade deficit was identical with the account deficit at £971 million, since government statisticians estimated that invisible trade in finance, services and interest payments had been roughly in balance in the past two months. The narrowing of the deficit between October and November resulted from a ½ per cent drop in imports to £9.76 billion and a ½ per cent rise in exports to £9.79 billion.

In terms of the three-month averages that government statisticians believe give a better guide to the economy's underlying performance, imports, excluding erratic items, were 4½ per cent lower in the latest three-month period than in the one before, while exports were 1½ per cent higher. Compared with a year earlier, in the latest three months, non-merchandise imports were also 4½ per cent down, while exports were 7 per cent up.

The total current account deficit for the past three months was £2.75 billion, the smallest three-month figure since February 1988. The three-month visible trade deficit, at £2.84 billion, was the lowest since May 1987.

But there were also ominous elements in the latest trade data. The breakdown by commodities showed that the largest part of the improvement was due to sharply falling imports of industrial raw mat-

erials, down 14 per cent in the latest three-month period, and manufactured goods, down 7½ per cent. These drops reflect the deep recession that took hold quite suddenly in Britain from the summer onwards. Export growth, meanwhile, is showing signs of slowing. Exports of manufactured goods, 7 per cent higher than a year ago, have risen by only 1 per cent between the last two three-month periods.

Providing further confirmation of the suddenness and depth of the recession, the government yesterday published cyclical indicators of the economy for October. These showed further step falls in both the coincident and shorter leading indicators. The coincident indicator, which reflects the strength of current economic activity, fell to 91.5 in October, from 92.5 the month before.

The shorter leading indicator, which signals turning points in the economy about six months in advance, fell even more sharply to 90.7 from 91.8. The longer leading indicator, which tends to start rising about 12 months before the end of a recession, rose slightly to 93.4 (93.2 in September) but this move was considered too small to be statistically significant.

● The French trade deficit in November fell sharply and unexpectedly to Fr601 million compared with Fr669 billion in October. Economists had expected a result of about Fr6 billion. The figures seemed to reflect destocking in the corporate sector.



All hands on deck: Charlotte Tester copes with some of the hectic business at NatWest's personal dealing operation in Mansell Street

## Nadir colleague agrees to talk to fraud squad

By NEIL BENNETT

ELIZABETH Forsyth, a central figure in the Polly Peck affair, has agreed to talk to the Serious Fraud Office in the New Year.

A statement from Lane and Partners, her solicitor, said she had agreed a "mutually convenient date" to be interviewed, but her spokesman declined to say when this would be.

Mrs Forsyth was the chairman of South Audley Management, the company that ran private trusts belonging to Asil Nadir, Polly Peck's chairman. An SFO raid on South Audley's headquarters led to a collapse in Polly Peck's share price and to the appointment of receivers to the group.

Britain last week and has since been taking refuge at her five bedroomed Georgian house in Grantham.

Meanwhile, Richard Stone, one of Polly Peck International's administrators, said he was trying to unlock up to £30 million from planned property developments in northern Cyprus and Turkey to fund working capital in Vestel and Sansui, the group's electronics subsidiaries.

Mr Stone said the only free capital in the group was in the form of deposits on 12 developments in Cyprus and Turkey, which the administrators are negotiating to free.

## NatWest scores record volume in power shares

By MARTIN WALLER

A TOTAL of 50,000 people sold their electricity shares through the branches of National Westminster Bank yesterday, while almost 50 million shares went through the stock market as a whole.

NatWest hired an extra 30 dealing staff, virtually doubling the numbers at the headquarters of its Touchscreen personal dealing operation at Mansell Street in the City.

The bank's stockbroking arm is claiming an 18 per cent share of the market in electricity shares yesterday.

But although the volume of business at NatWest was a

record for any privatisation, the huge wave of sellers predicted by some did not materialise.

NatWest and other easy dealing services will be open again for a half day's trading on Christmas Eve.

In all the bank did almost 28,000 deals, in trading that was described as hectic and likely to stay that way until at least the new year.

Officials handling the £5.2 billion flotation of the 12 regional electricity distributors have promised that all the share certificates will be in the post by the Christmas break.

A fair proportion of new shareholders, therefore, will not yet have received theirs and were in no position to deal yesterday.

The Mansell Street operation is electronically linked to 270 of NatWest's 3,000 branches around the country that offer the Touchscreen service.

In all 47.5 million electricity shares changed hands yesterday.

The prices, which started the day firm, dropped a few

pence as the market braced itself for retail investors to sell.

But the shares have been well supported by suggestions of stake-building, and some of the buying is thought to have come from across the Atlantic.

Talks are continuing into the new year, meanwhile, between the government's advisers and the next two companies due off the privatisation slipway, National Power and PowerGen, the generators.

The talks are being described as "very robust" and "tough but fair", which suggests to observers some bone-crunching negotiations at the energy department.

The issues that must be settled by January 18, when the privatisation prospectus for the two goes to the printers, is dividend and profits forecasts and their capital structure.

The question of what debts they will take on has largely been settled, although the two companies are reserving the right to renegotiate the accepted figure of £700 million during the current negotiations.

## Executive Editor David Brewerton

THE POUND

US dollar 1.8840 (-0.0240)

German mark 2.8854 (+0.0249)

Exchange Index 92.8 (-0.2)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share 1688.4 (+1.2)

FT-SE 100 2164.4 (+6.6)

New York Dow Jones 2837.13 (+7.87)

Tokyo Nikkei Ave 2119.60 (-405.34)

Closing Prices ... Page 31

Major indices and major changes Page 30

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base: 14%

3-month Interbank 14-13 1/4%

3-month cable bill 13 1/4-13 1/2%

US: Prime Rate 10%

Federal Funds 7 1/2%

3-month Treasury Bills 6.53-6.52%

30-year bonds 105 1/2-105 1/2%

CURRENCIES

London: New York: £: \$1.8840

E: DM2.8854

E: Sfr2.24751

E: FFfr 6.55

E: Tw212.13

E: Index-29.1

E: ECU 1.742823

E: ECU 1.410391

E: SDR1.347558

GOLD

London Fixing: AM \$382.25 pm \$383.75

close \$382.75-383.25 (22/29)

203.40

New York: Comet \$380.55-381.05

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Jan 1) \$26.90 bbl (\$27.15)

Denotes latest trading price

TOURIST RATES

Bank Bank

Australia \$ 2.32 2.37

Austria Sch 21.15 19.75

Belgium F 65.10 58.10

Canada C 1.30 1.25

Denmark Kr 11.25 10.25

France F 16.25 15.25

Germany DM 3.01 2.82

Greece Dr 118 108

Hong Kong \$ 10.25 9.25

Ireland P 1.28 1.18

Italy L 2070 1970

Japan Yen 225 215

Netherlands Gld 3.35 3.25

Norway Kr 11.75 11.05

Portugal Esc 205 195

Spain Ptas 166 156

Sweden Kr 11.25 10.25

Switzerland Fr 2.58 2.48

Turkey Lira 150 140

USA \$ 1.30 1.25

Yugoslavia Dnr 27.50 26.50

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques.

Retail Price Index: 100.0 (November)

## Elf deal with Amoco is referred

By ROSS TIERMAN

INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

PETER Lilley, the trade secretary, has referred the purchase of Amoco's United Kingdom petrol refining and marketing operations by Elf Aquitaine of France to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

The reference is the fifth takeover of British assets by a foreign state-controlled company to be examined by the commission under a policy instituted by Nicholas Ridley, Mr Lilley's forerunner, in July. It is the fourth involving a French company.

In making the reference, Mr Lilley rejected the advice of Sir Gordon Barr, director-general of fair trading.

Mr Lilley said the ability of the French government to influence Elf and Total Compagnie Francaise de Petroles, which also competes in Britain, "raised issues of public interest which warranted investigation".

Under the deal, completed in August, Elf bought Amoco's 70 per cent stake in a 100,000-barrel-a-day refinery and terminal at Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire, and pipelines to Kingsbury, Warwickshire and Cadishead, Manchester.

Elf also acquired 200 Amoco service stations, doubling the number of its British outlets and giving it a 4.2 per cent share of the market. The disposal completed Amoco's withdrawal from petrol refining and marketing outside North America. The price has not been disclosed.

A spokesman for Elf in Paris declined to comment. Official notification of the decision had not been received. Amoco was seeking reaction from its US parent.

Elf is 55 per cent owned by the French government. The rest of its shares are in private hands. The French government also has a 35 per cent holding in Total.

In July, Mr Ridley said he would in future be paying particularly close attention to the degree of state control over acquiring companies when deciding whether to refer deals to the MMC.

## Freemans meets the Christmas rush

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

AMITY EDITOR

THERE is increasing speculation that Sears, the retail group, is talking to Next about the possibility of buying Gratian, Next's mail order business.

Sears has a 2 per cent stake in Next and has indicated in the past that it would be interested in acquiring Gratian, Next's mail order business.

Gratian and Freemans, sister companies and know each other well. Freemans, bought by Sears for £477 million almost three years ago, is bucking the trend in the high street. Turnover for the past six months is expected to be 10 per cent up on last year, with sales in the Christmas period significantly higher.

David Jones, chief executive of Next, is not believed to be considering any large asset sales, but the slump in the Next share price from more than 80p a year ago to 17½p makes the group look vulnerable.

Sears raised £68.7 million this week through property disposals. If it were to acquire Gratian, Sears would have to pay about £140 million, according to analysts. This sum would be enough for Next to meet the payments on its convertible bond issues, which are due in 1992. It is thought unlikely that Sears, which has gearing of less than 20 per cent, would launch a hostile bid for Next.

Mike Hawker, managing



Mailing to order: Mike Hawker, of Freemans, which is open seven days a week

director of Freemans, said: "This has been a very successful year for us and business in the past two weeks has been particularly strong. Lingerie, toys and jewellery are among the best selling lines, with lingerie up 40 per cent on last year." Totebag Mutant Hero Turtle merchandise is also selling well.

Shoppers tend to order Christmas goods from mail order companies early to ensure they arrive in time. Mr Hawker said 90 per cent of orders were telephoned and most were delivered within

two to three days. The last parcels for Christmas will be dispatched today. "We are amused by the current Sunday trading debate," says Mr Hawker. "We are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

Mr Hawker said Freemans, the fourth largest mail order group, has lifted its market share to 14.7 per cent and has taken business from Gratian.

"There are obvious economies of scale but Freemans has grown very successful on its own so far. The Gratian issue is secondary," he said. But while Freemans may be

bucking the trend, Sears as a whole is not.

Paul Morris, a retail analyst at Goldman Sachs, has published a bearish note on the group in which he says the present Sears ratings look optimistic given its past record and modest recovery prospects.

Mr Morris is forecasting pre-tax profits of £110 million for the year to January, down from £183.5 million last year. But he expects the home shopping division to contribute £30 million to the operating level, up from £26.6 million.

## Flag hauled down at Ensign Trust

By NEIL BENNETT

BANKING CORRESPONDENT

AFTER five years of swashbuckling investment management, Ensign Trust has been scuttled by its owners. The company has been dismissed as investment manager of the Merchant Navy Officers' Pension Fund, the controlling shareholder, and ordered to wind itself up within five years.

The pension fund is terminating its management contract with Argosy Asset Management, Ensign's management subsidiary, at the end of March, and will hold a beauty parade for new managers to look after its £1.5 billion fund.

This will remove the largest part of Ensign's business. Apart from the Merchant Navy officers' fund, Argosy manages only £600 million, which mainly belongs to the company or

New Frontiers Development Trust, a subsidiary.

The Merchant Navy officers' fund trustees, led by Tony Ashmore, the chief executive, decided to dismiss Argosy after they grew unhappy with performance. Ensign has a reputation as an aggressive manager of big stakes in small companies. Almost half Ensign's assets are invested in companies worth less than £20 million.

Ensign has had considerable success. But the depression in the smaller company sector in the past two years has dulled its performance.

The Merchant Navy officers' fund was finally started into action after the sale of Filinvest, the music publisher, to Thorn EMI. In the annual report, Ensign's stake was valued at £11.6 million. But when the sale was finalised, Filinvest's assets were far lower than estimated, and Thorn reduced its

offer. Ensign has been forced to write off the stake.

"It was not even as if the value of the stake declined," said Mr Ashmore. "One day there was £11.6 million and the next there was nothing."

The Merchant Navy officers' fund has said it is ready to sell the £260 million stake in Ensign, but the fund thinks it is unlikely that it will receive an offer. Instead the trust is being given five years to sell off its portfolio and pay off investors. Ensign, whose shares have been trading at a heavy discount to asset value, rose 10p to 53p yesterday as hopes rose that the company could unlock its assets.

The news was announced at Ensign's annual meeting. John Giffith, a non-executive director, demanded the Merchant Navy officers' fund make a full offer to minority shareholders. "It is entirely wrong the trustees have

discredited these investment managers publicly. If they wanted change they had ample scope to initiate whatever was needed," he said later.

Geoffrey Musson, Argosy's managing director, said the move had fallen on the company "like a bombshell". He gave a warning to other investment managers of the consequences of doing business with big pension funds. He said: "If you are in bed with an elephant and it rolls over in the night, what is going to happen to you?"

Mr Ashmore said the trustees needed to look after their 60,000 pensioners properly. "We have negative cashflow. We simply do not have the money to support some of the long-term projects of Ensign's. Some of the punts have come through very well. But not lately. Perhaps ideas are running out."

## Astra reshape cuts £79m from deficit

By JONATHAN PRYNN

ASTRA Holdings, the loss-making munitions group, has announced a capital reconstruction that will reduce the £83 million deficit on its revenue account to only £4.1 million.

The deficit was built up through accumulated losses, including a £65 million extraordinary write-off last year related to the closure of a Belgian subsidiary involved in the Iraqi supergun affair.

The reconstruction involves an application to the High Court to have the nominal value of the company's ordinary shares reduced from 25p to 10p and for the share premium account to be cancelled. This will allow Astra to transfer £79.5 million to its profit and loss account, reducing the deficit to £4.1 million.

The reconstruction will bring the company a step closer to

paying a dividend, once it returns to trading profits. However, Roy Barber, the chairman, said his "first, second and third priority" would be to reduce Astra's £40 million debt burden to manageable levels before any dividend payment could be considered.

Astra also announced a record order book in America due to increased demand for its explosives since the American military build-up in the Gulf.

Astra said it had received one \$18 million order from the American defence department and had "further potentially large orders in the discussion stage". In addition the company said its British order book was improving.

The new business was announced as Astra unveiled reduced pre-tax losses of £2.5 million for the six months to end-September against £3.4 million last time. The company made a £65.2 million attributable loss in the 1989-90 financial year. Turnover increased by 12 per cent to £44.3 million. There is no interim dividend (nil).

Mr Barber said a cost-saving programme begun this year will have reduced the company's cost base by £10 million a year by March. The company also intends to sell off "non-core and non-income producing assets." However, no offers have yet been received for any of these assets, Mr Barber said.

He added that "The combination of a sound industrial base and viable order book means that the company is now positioned to look to the future."

The shares increased 3p to 12.5p.

Manpower suffers 8% drop

Halfway loss at Platignum

Ensign profits down £331,000 at half



## Shaftesbury continues sector trend with losses

By MATTHEW BOND

SHAFTESBURY Group, which specialises in West End property, has reported pre-tax losses of £5.5 million after writing down the value of some development properties by £4.3 million. No final dividend is to be paid (1.5p).

Shaftesbury's losses come at the end of a week that has shown clearly how hard the commercial property market is being affected by high interest rates and the imbalance of supply and demand. City Site Estates, Cabra and Zurich have all reported significant losses, while profits at Dwyer were sharply reduced.

Net asset values have also been falling. Shaftesbury followed the trend, with net assets per share dropping from 284p to 222p, a fall of 22 per cent. The shares fell 18p to 100p.

The losses for the year to end-September compare with pre-tax profits of £5 million last year. The interest bill almost trebled, rising from £1.2 million to £3.4 million. The results were also hit by £2.5 million of losses from associates. In 1989, Shaftesbury's associate companies, where partners include Dares Estates and Ford Sellar Morris, contributed £894,000 to profits.

Peter Levy, chairman, said the company had largely completed its development programme. "Our investment portfolio will continue to benefit from our policy of active management and we expect further increases in rental income from rent reviews and lease renewals."

## Manpower suffers 8% drop

By COLIN CAMPBELL

MANPOWER, the Milwaukee employment agency group, reported after-tax profits for the year to end-October falling by 8.3 per cent from \$65.8 million to \$60.3 million, on revenues 11.5 per cent higher at \$3.04 billion.

The figures exclude goodwill amortisation, certain exchange losses and the effect of gains or losses on the sale and closure of businesses. The group is changing its year-end from October to December.

The American side of Manpower advanced in the last three months of the reporting period, and also over the 12-month period, but the world markets for the firm's temporary help services are now showing signs of economic weakness.

In November, the group's planned sale of five British agency chains was called off after fund-raising difficulties associated with the leveraged buyout. The agency sale of non-core British businesses would have severed Manpower's unhappy connection with Blue Arrow.

## Halfway loss at Platignum

By OUR CITY STAFF

PLATIGNUM, the pen and furniture group, has reversed last year's interim £209,000 profit, with a £331,000 pre-tax loss for the six months to end-September.

The company made a small trading profit but was hit by a £200,000 interest charge and a £173,000 exceptional redundancy and rationalisation cost. There will be no interim dividend on ordinary or preference shares.

Stanley Cohen and Simon Knott, joint chairmen, said the company had encountered reduced demand in most areas, particularly for its consumer products. Turnover fell from £11.2 million to £10 million.

Mr Cohen and Mr Knott said cost reduction and other rationalisation measures would lead to an improved trading performance.

## Ensor profits drop to £331,000 at half time

By PHILIP PANGALOS

WEAKER market conditions, particularly in the building sector, took their toll on profits at Ensor Holdings, the USM-quoted vehicle distribution and building products group.

The company suffered a slump in pre-tax profits from £877,000 to £331,000 in the six months to end-September, as turnover declined from £29.6 million to £26.1 million.

Brian Morgan, chairman, said the recession had a marked effect on the manufacturing and distribution divisions, reducing turnover and eroding margins. Profits at the distribution division fell from

# WPP Group shares plunge as interim payout is cancelled

By MARTIN WALLER

WPP GROUP, the debt-stricken advertising agency, has withdrawn its interim dividend payment, announced in August, and is holding talks with its bankers over restructuring its debts.

The shares fell almost 20p in early trading before the news but ended 11p lower at 50p. A 13.7p interim dividend announced in August had been due on January 2, but at a board meeting on Thursday, the decision was taken to shelve the payment.

Martin Sorrell, the chief executive, would not comment on the circumstances surrounding the dropped payment. But it was a move that met with the approval of WPP's banks, to which it owes an estimated £350 million.

The dropped dividend will save WPP about £8 million. The company has until April to decide whether to pay another £12 million as dividends on its preference shares, but the market expects this payment to be passed.

Tom Donaldson, a managing director of JP Morgan, which is representing the banks, said WPP's move was "a very responsible and very difficult decision made at the right time". Talks with the banks will continue into the new year, and he was "as confident as one reasonably can be" of a successful outcome.

"The company never asked the banks for approval, and there was no question of the banks either approving or disapproving," he said.

But the banks are thought to have prompted the dropped payment as part of continuing discussions with the group, which has seen a catastrophic collapse in its share price since the summer. The shares, which traded at more than £7 earlier in the year, were just under £4 last month, when WPP announced that profits for calendar 1990 would not match market estimates of £100 million.

"I think the banks were behind it in suggesting it, but it had to be ultimately a board decision," said Neil Blackley, analyst at James Capel.

Market estimates are now for £90 million pre-tax, so if both dividends are dropped the money saved will be sufficient to make up the difference.

WPP has yet to draw up its budget for 1991, but the outlook is gloomy, given that analysts and commentators expect the adverse conditions over the last months of this year to continue into next, said David Ogilvy, the chairman, in a letter spelling out the latest news to shareholders.

"It may therefore be some time before the group can resume the pattern of growth in profits and earnings experienced up until a few months ago."

WPP says it is not in breach of its banking covenants, which are thought to require interest payments to be covered about 2.3 times by 1990's profits. But the loss of cash flow because of the difficult state of advertising markets has meant WPP is unlikely to see borrowings fall as fast as it had promised the banks, and next year's cover



The long and winding road: Martin Sorrell in New York. WPP is talking to banks over restructuring group debts

target, believed to be about 2.8 times, could therefore be at risk.

Analysts' forecasts for next year, in the absence of any guidance on 1991 budgets from the company, range from £65 million to £90 million pre-tax. The agencies team at Warburg Securities, for example, is forecasting £77 million.

WPP has come under pressure to make disposals but is known to be keen to keep the group together. It is prepared to sell a small agency, Scall McCabe Sloves, but this is unlikely to make much of a dent in its debt mountain. Mr Ogilvy said the "major banks" had reaffirmed their support for WPP, and he was confident that suitable arrangements would be successfully concluded in the near future.

But although the group was achieving "satisfactory profits" in the present adverse economic climate, "our cash flow is now below our projections of a few months ago. As a result, a major priority is to conserve cash". A dividend payment was therefore not in the company's best interests.

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## BUSINESS ROUNDUP

### William Cook buys Ohio firm for \$14m

WILLIAM Cook, the acquisitive Sheffield foundry group, is expanding its American operations with the purchase of Unicast, a steel castings supplier, for a maximum of \$14 million. Unicast, of Toledo, Ohio, supplies the railroad, road freight, materials handling, construction, military and mining industries, and made pre-tax profits of \$1.7 million in the year to April 1, on turnover of \$22.1 million.

Andrew Cook, chairman and chief executive, said: "With sterling locked into the exchange-rate mechanism at its current strong levels, William Cook would have found increasing difficulty in supplying US demand from the UK." He added that Unicast's proprietary product range gives his company a strong position in the American rail and mining markets, which are expected to show "a significant level of growth in the future".

### Forminster figures rise

FORMINSTER, the clothing manufacturer, lifted pre-tax profits from £896,000 to £995,000 in the half year to end-October, on turnover up from £9.26 million to £10.7 million, despite difficult market conditions. The company is confident of "another satisfactory year". The interim dividend improved to 3.475p (3.025p). Earnings per share climbed to 20.75p (17.22p).

### Learmonth halves payout

LEARMONTH & Burnett Management Systems, the USM-quoted computer services group, has cut its interim dividend from 0.8p to 0.4p, after a pre-tax loss of £618,000 in the half year to end-October, against last time's profit of £513,000. Turnover was £9.64 million (£8.03 million). There was a 3.4p loss per share (earnings of 2.7p). The shares lost 10p to 45p.

### Ifico results plunge

PRE-TAX profits at Ifico, the commercial insurance broker, plunged from £2.17 million to £493,000 in the year to end-June. Turnover fell from £11.5 million to £1.91 million, largely due to disposals. There were exceptional costs of £77,000. Earnings per share dived from 4.69p to 1.14p. There is no dividend, against 0.5p last time.

Jacques Delacave, chairman, said the fundamental changes that took place during 1989 and 1990 make any meaningful comparison between the group's figures for those two years "well nigh impossible". There was an extraordinary debit of £2.74 million, mainly due to litigation costs relating to CRC International Finance.

### Buyout at Ryan Hotels

KEN Phelan and Patrick McCarthy, executives at Ryan Hotels, the Dublin hotel group, are to buy three hotels via a £5.1 million management buyout. The hotels are Blooms Hotel in Dublin, Yeats Country Hotel at Roscoe Point and the Westport Ryan Hotel. Ryan says the hotels have been sold at book value, with the proceeds being used to reduce borrowings.

### Margins cut at Kelsey

KELSEY Industries, the solder maker and roofing contractor, reports a slight increase in pre-tax profits from £3.4 million to £3.44 million for the year to end-September on turnover up from £44.1 million to £52.1 million. The adverse movement in the tin price affected margins. The final dividend is 20p (18.375p), making 28p (22.5p). Earnings per share were 64p (58.6p).

## Isosceles finishes its refinancing

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

ISOSCELES, the highly geared company that owns the Gateway supermarket chain, has completed its refinancing, although a formal announcement is unlikely for several days to allow the lawyers to rubber stamp the documents.

Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company (A&P), which has a 20 per cent stake in Isosceles, will not participate in the refinancing, although it supports the deal.

The refinancing package involves placing £150 million of shares and converting £85 million of mezzanine debt, with an interest rate of 16 per cent, into equity.

Wasserman Perella, which also holds 20 per cent of the equity in Isosceles, is believed to have agreed to take up A&P's rights. This will give the American finance house a holding of just under 40 per cent. A&P's shareholding falls to less than 10 per cent. It is showing a loss on its original stake and had been reluctant to commit new money.

Relations between A&P and Isosceles cooled in July when A&P publicly attacked the running of Gateway. The two groups have since made up their differences.

A&P, which has a seat on the Isosceles board, acquired its 20 per cent after selling its Gateway shares to Isosceles in August last year. Isosceles, led by David Smith, chief executive, successfully beat a combined bid by A&P and WP for control of the supermarket chain. The refinancing became necessary after Isosceles failed to sell a package of Gateway stores in March.

THE Australian stock exchange has decided, after long deliberation, to allow The News Corporation to issue limited-voting preference shares.

The decision also means that other Australian companies can now, with shareholder approval, issue a form of quasi-equities that have limited voting rights. News Corp shares recovered 34 cents to Aus\$4.69 yesterday after a Aus\$1.09 fall on Thursday.

Ray Schoer, the national companies director of the Australian stock exchange, said a number of companies were interested in issuing participation preference shares but that "none of them ranks in the league of News Corp". TNT Limited is believed to be one of these companies.

Mr Schoer said News Corp's application had forced the exchange to decide on a policy on the issuing of such shares.

It had earlier been expected that News Corp might make an early free bonus issue of the new shares to existing shareholders to establish a market value for possible future cash-raising issues, but News Corp, which is still conducting talks on debt restructuring, said yesterday only that its board will consider the matter. Mr Schoer said allowing the limited voting shares was in line with such issues in America and the United Kingdom.

The international media group, which owns The Times, had said it might move its head office, which has always been in Australia, offshore.

Amount you invest	% Gross interest per annum	% Net interest per annum*	% Net interest for closure before 6.4.91**
£40,000+	15.00	11.25	11.70
£25,000+	14.40	10.80	11.23
£10,000+	13.60	10.20	10.61
£500+	12.00	9.64	10.02
£1+	7.00	5.25	5.46

\* If you'd like to withdraw more than £10,000 per calendar month you can give 30 days notice and lose no interest whatsoever.

Or, if you want your money quicker you can have immediate access with 30 days loss of interest - only on the amount over £10,000.

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☐ Interest to be paid annually into my bank/ a Northern Rock Current or investment account.

(Tick appropriate box) Please confirm the application.

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Signature/s \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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\*\*2 If the account is closed prior to 6th April 1991 then the variable net rates above will apply. The basic rate income tax liability on which will be calculated by us and may not be reclaimed.

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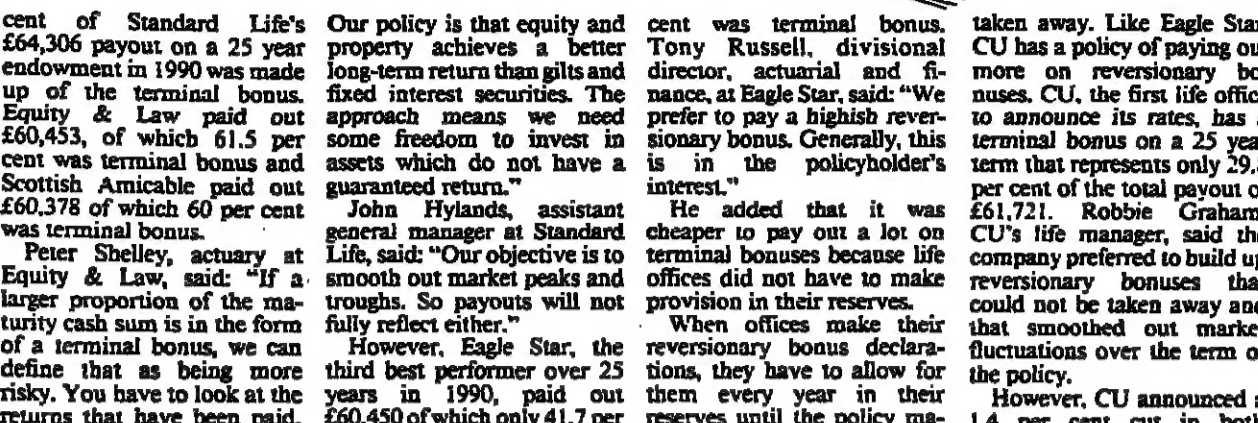






## BRIEFINGS

According to statistics in *Money Management*, the specialist magazine, 62.9 per



However, Eagle Star, the third best performer over 25 years in 1990, paid out £60.450 of which only 41.7 per

reversionary bonus declarations, they have to allow for them every year in their reserves until the policy ma-

However, CU announced a 14 per cent cut in both

"If there were major cuts in reversionary bonuses as well as cuts in terminal bonuses then we could begin to see some problems," said Standard Life's Mr Hylands. "But the rates of return are not threatening at the moment."

"Recent investment conditions mean that shorter term contracts are more affected than longer term contracts but there are substantial margins built in for mortgage contracts," said Scottish Amicable's Mr Baxter.

□ Home buyers will be able to draw down up to 95 per cent of the value of their property with a cheque book mortgage service from London Financial Services (LFS) and the Southdown Building Society. LFS has set aside an initial £50 million for the service, which allows people to write cheques against the property's value. The mortgage rate is 14.5 per cent and LFS says this is a cheaper way of borrowing money, particularly for small businesses, than taking out a bank loan.

□ The Inland Revenue will no longer ask for copies of every new trust document when assessing trusts for income and capital gains tax liabilities. From the start of the next tax year on April 6, tax officers will rely on

□ Leamington Spa Building Society's new one-year limited issue Summit Bond term share will pay interest of 11.25 per cent net, 15 per cent gross. The minimum investment is £1,000 and the maximum is £500,000. Savers are not allowed to withdraw money during the term of the bond.

For readers who may have missed a copy of *The Times* this week, we repeat below the week's *Portfolio* price changes (today's are on page 31).

Days	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Weekend Total
1	+5	+2	+4	+3	+2			
2	+5	+1	+7	+5	+2			
3	+9	+1	+3	+7	+4			
4	+4	+2	+3	+3	+2			
5	+8	+1	+3	+6	+5			
6	+5	+2	+7	+4	+1			
7	+4	+4	+6	+8	+2			
8	+4	+1	+3	+5	+3			
9	+9	+1	+3	+7	+4			
10	+5	+3	+4	+5	+2			
11	+4	+4	+4	+4	+1			
12	+7	+1	+1	+8	+5			
13	+5	+5	+4	+6	+2			
14	+8	+2	+7	+3	+3			
15	+3	+2	+5	+2	+3			
16	+8	+1	+2	+7	+3			
17	+5	+1	+3	+3	+3			
18	+7	+1	+2	+8	+4			
19	+7	+2	+7	+5	+2			
20	+4	+1	+4	+2	+2			
21	+8	+1	+2	+8	+4			
22	+5	+3	+7	+4	+1			
23	+7	+4	+4	+4	+4			
24	+5	+2	+6	+3	+2			
25	+4	+1	+4	+6	+4			
26	+8	+2	+1	+7	+3			
27	+1	+3	+4	+5	+3			
28	+2	+2	+8	+4	+1			
29	+4	+1	+5	+3	+2			
30	+7	+3	+8	+5	+3			
31	+8	+2	+2	+6	+4			
32	+1	+1	+5	+3	+3			
33	+5	+3	+5	+5	+2			
34	+3	+1	+4	+3	+2			
35	+5	+1	+5	+2	+5			
36	+6	+4	+4	+5	+2			
37	+6	+2	+6	+3	+2			
38	+4	+5	+5	+8	+1			
39	+6	+1	+1	+7	+4			
40	+5	+3	+3	+4	+2			
41	+4	+1	+3	+2	+4			
42	+8	+2	+1	+7	+5			
43	+5	+6	+4	+5	+3			
44	+3	+3	+7	+4	+2			

THE expected rush by stags wanting to sell electricity shares for a quick profit was slow to start this week, but cheap and instant dealing services were largely ignored on Wednesday and Thursday as millions of interim certificates were posted out.

At the Skipton Building Society, which has 150,000 people registered for free dealing, only 500 sales were made.

A spokesman said that the offer would remain open until February 22 and he expected that people were holding back hoping to obtain a higher price

In January or February. The Leeds Permanent Building Society reported "no queues" for its free dealing service. A spokesman said: "Because all the allocations are so low people are working out that even with free dealing they are not going to make very much. We think they are going to hold on for the vouchers and dividend."

At Barclaysbank, which is offering telephone dealing for a minimum fee of £12.50, deals were running at 3,000 an hour yesterday, twice the pace of Thursday. The number of

would be received. The payment was lower, reflecting the fall in the RPL. The months in question are November 1982, February 1983, March 1984, September 1984, February 1985, September 1985, September 1986, September 1987 and February 1988.

Because of this ruling the winner of the £100,000 prize in the first weekly draw in August 1989 was in fact ineligible to enter it. However, he or she will be allowed to keep the prize. The winner of that week's £50,000 prize will be awarded another £50,000 because he or she was the rightful winner while the £25,000 winner will receive another £25,000.

Payouts of £100 will go to 518 people while a further 579 will receive prizes of £50. Another, smaller, windfall of £1.50 plus interest is on its way to 15,000 holders of index-linked savings certificates. All lost out on the nine occasions since 1975 when the retail prices index (RPI) fell at the beginning of the month. Although holders had cashed in their certificates at the end of the previous month, the repayment was valued on the first day of the next month when National Savings estimated payment.

National Savings says, however, that most people gained rather than lost when their savings were valued at the estimated date of delivery rather than the date of posting. Over the past 70 years, it calculates that it has paid out an extra £300 million. "If National Savings had valued the repayments at the date of posting rather than at the expected date of receipt, customers would have been deprived of the full value of their investments," says a spokesman. National Savings spokesman said there should be no change in next year's finance bill that would allow National Savings to continue to value savings at the expected date of delivery rather than at the posting date.

[illegible]



The government is at last to stop the inertia selling of insurance to people who take out credit agreements such as credit cards. The decision is long overdue.

The move is part of a package of measures to make credit safer for customers. Consumer groups and the director general of fair trading have long been concerned about inertia selling of expensive insurance to borrowers.

The industry prefers to describe its sales method as "negative option selling". It means that applicants have to put a cross in a box to avoid paying for payment protection insurance. Reputable card issuers have avoided the practice because they recognised it was not a true service for their customers. Others continued to sell often unwanted credit insurance because it is very profitable. They know that if they require credit applicants to mark a box to show they do not want

insurance, they have double the take up that they would with positive option selling.

The trade department has dragged its feet over the matter. But this week it ruled that inertia selling of payment protection insurance and other credit-related services will be prohibited.

The credit industry has argued that a code of practice would have gone a considerable way to guard against the risk of consumers being induced to buy insurance they did not really want. The government has decided, however, that consumers should not be charged for services that they have not "positively and expressly requested". The government's proposed changes to the Consumer Credit Act will also ban credit companies from



## COMMENT

LINDSAY COOK  
WEEKEND MONEY EDITOR

## Victory in sight for borrowers

raising credit limits, other than through inflation, without the specific request of the customer. This should prevent companies topping up the credit limits to tempt more spending.

Credit agreements will also give customers time to pause for thought. These will warn shoppers not to sign unless they can afford the payments. Cancellation of credit deals signed on trade premises will be allowed.

Customers who shop around to

make sure they obtain the best deals on washing machines or three piece suits will now have time to consider how good a deal the store's credit agreement is. Currently, customers who change their minds can find themselves paying off substantially more than they borrowed.

People will still have to take care when applying for credit, but there should be a lot less scope for confusion. It is good also that Edward Leigh, the consumer

affairs minister, recognises the shortcomings in the proposed banks' and building societies' code of banking practice. He acknowledges it cannot be the complete answer to irresponsible practices in the credit market.

The proposal is that the new rules should come into force three months after they are laid before Parliament, which would be next summer at the earliest. The credit industry could do itself some good by voluntarily cleaning up its act before then.

## Justice done

Common sense prevailed in Yorkshire this week. Leeds Crown Court dismissed as a "complete nonsense" the case

brought against the Halifax Building Society by the Data Protection Registrar. The largest society was charged under the Data Protection Act with using personal information for crime prevention without registering it.

Surely the law should be encouraging financial institutions to prevent crime. Building societies co-operated to help catch the baby food extortionist. He was jailed this week on the same day that the Halifax was cleared. This month the Bank of England issued new guidelines to prevent money laundering.

It is in the interests of all bank and building society customers that security measures are taken to ensure that misrouted cheques cannot be cashed by the wrong people.

If found guilty the Halifax could have faced an unlimited fine and other institutions could have been discouraged from acting properly.

THERE was a flurry of tax-exempt special savings accounts (Tessas) launched this week in preparation for their official start on January 1 (Lindsay Cook writes).

The Nationwide Building Society is offering a top rate of 15.5 per cent in the first year to people who open a Tessa Bond account before February 28 and open a salary-credited FlexAccount or sell a property through Nationwide Estate Agents or take out a Nationwide mortgage. The bond has

a minimum deposit of £3,000 and will allow investments up to the Tessa five-year limit of £9,000.

The society will open a feeder account and at the start of each year transfer the maximum annual investment into a Tessa. The core investment rate will be 14 per cent plus bonuses. The feeder account will earn interest at 14 per cent

but this will be taxable. A loyalty bonus of 0.5 per cent will be paid at the end of the term. Nationwide's Tessa Flexible Savings Plan will pay 13.5 per cent from £25.

The Tessa Reserve account of National Westminster Bank will earn 14.75 per cent when it is launched. A bonus of 1 per cent of the first year's contributions will be paid at

the end of five years to people who invest before the end of March.

The Woolwich Building Society is offering 13 per cent on sums over £25 and 14 per cent on £3,000 paid into a Tessa Bonus account. Those who invest before the end of March will receive a 1 per cent bonus. There will be additional bonuses of 0.25 per cent

in years two, three, four and five.

Midland Bank is to pay an initial rate of 13.5 per cent on its Tessa, which will accept regular instalments as low as £10. The National & Provincial Building Society will launch its Tessa with an interest rate of 13.5 per cent on deposits from £1.

The Bradford & Bingley

Building Society's Maximiser High Return Tessa will pay 15 per cent including a 1 per cent bonus to those investors who put £9,000 into its scheme. The £6,000 that will remain in the feeder account will earn interest at 11.25 per cent after tax is deducted.

Bradford & Bingley's Maximiser Optimum Tessa will pay 14 per cent including a 1 per cent bonus. The Maximiser Classic Tessa will pay 12 per cent, including bonus, on sums over £25.

## Tempting Tessas prepare for launch day

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INVEST BEFORE 1991  
AND WE'LL BACKDATE  
INTEREST FROM 4.12.90

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FROM A TOP 10 SOCIETY

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(12% NET P.A.)

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£10,000 - £24,999	15.00%	11.25%
£5,000 - £9,999	14.67%	11.00%

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Replied to mailshot: Lockley Harris of Birmingham

## Watchdogs warn 'steer clear' of classic car deals

By TONY HETHERINGTON

FINANCIAL watchdogs in London and Brussels have issued a warning against dealing with a company soliciting funds to invest in classic cars. European Classic Car Investments is British-run. Its glossy literature, is printed in English but it operates from smart offices in Brussels.

From there, mailshots are sent to potential investors in the United Kingdom. These claim that classic cars such as Jaguars and Aston Martins have appreciated in value over the past ten years at an annual compound rate of 35 per cent. Potential clients are invited to return a postcard that will go into a draw for a £3,000 cash prize. Those who do so are sent an expensive produced brochure, which explains that ECCI "targets" classic cars it believes will grow in value.

Each car's price is divided into 100 units, costing from £2,000 to £10,000 each. When ECCI has sold enough units to cover the cost of the car, plus an extra 15 per cent that it takes for itself, it buys the vehicle on behalf of the syndicate of investors.

Profits can be huge, the company boasts, quoting a profit of 650 per cent on one deal: "Your £450 contract, syndicated in 1987, would have made you a clear profit of £3,050 in a year-and-a-half." Attractive as that may sound, European Classic Car Investments was not operating in 1987, according to the Belgian authorities, and still has no licence to offer any investments from Belgian soil.

The Banking Commission, a Belgian watchdog, says ECCI has never applied for the permit the body believes it should have. Police in Brussels have now been asked to investigate.

The warning was echoed by the Securities and Investments Board in London. Betty Powell, SIB's spokeswoman, said: "What is being offered is a unisited investment, and as such, under the Financial Services Act, the promoters must belong to one of the self-regulatory organisations - and they do not."

One investor who replied to ECCI's initial mailshot was Lockley Harris, a retired chartered surveyor from Birmingham. He was later telephoned by Matthew Brown, an ECCI salesman, who tried to sell him units in a classic car that was said to be in storage in

Germany. "I told him I was not very interested and that I did not have the money. He asked if I had any shares and offered to sell them for me at a good price. He rang me three times in one evening, from Brussels, and eventually I said I would agree."

"Apparently, whoever set the company up had got a contact in brokers TC Coombs, and that is where they were dealing."

ECCI appeared very anxious to clinch the deal, says Mr Harris. He offered to send his share certificates to Brussels, but ECCI told him it was not necessary. "It was the most fantastic thing," he recalled. "They said they would send someone and within an hour, there was a motorbike courier at the door."

Mr Harris was later sent transfer forms by ECCI, inviting him to sign over his shares, but he refused as he had never received contract notes for the sales, and was beginning to doubt he would receive anything in return. When he failed to obtain reassurance from ECCI, he contacted Coombs in London and arranged to have the share sales reversed.

Jeff Runciman, Coombs' chief dealer, confirmed the brokers had accepted business introduced by ECCI, but said the firm had closed the account before actually sending any clients' money to Brussels.

"We had one or two people coming on to us, saying that they had received no documentation from European Classic Cars and they were a bit unhappy about it. We have frozen the funds, and it is all in the hands of the SIB. The underlying clients will get all their money back. You might just have expected ECCI to have come on to me, saying 'where is our money?' - but that has not been the case."

Mr Runciman added that in many cases, Coombs did not have full details of the investors whose shares were being sold, as deals were arranged by ECCI. Investors who believe the brokers may be holding funds belonging to them should contact the SIB.

Classic cars enjoyed a vogue that drove prices up sharply until they peaked in 1988. Since then they have slid, in some cases by more than 50 per cent.

ECCI was not available for comment. Its Brussels office appeared to be unmanned.

## Answers to cost of living quiz

Credit: 1) c 2) c 3) b 4) b.  
Savings: 1) c 2) c 3) c 4) b.  
Mortgages: 1) a 2) b 3) c.

Pensions: 1) b 2) a 3) a.  
Taxation: 1) a 2) c 3) b 4) b.  
Investment: 1) b 2) a 3) c.



# The working class hero who turned his back on the party

By CAROL LEONARD

## BUSINESS PROFILE

Sir Allen Sheppard

The secretly cherished life-long ambition of Sir Allen Sheppard, the chairman and chief executive of Grand Metropolitan, was to be a politician. Now only four years away from retirement — his 58th birthday is on Christmas Day — he admits, unhesitatingly, that it has become his biggest regret.

"The only trouble is I would probably have joined the wrong party," he says. Sheppard, born in London's East End, was once an ardent Labour supporter. Influenced by his mother, who had to forgo a place at a teacher training college because her parents were too poor, he joined the party when he was a sixth-former at Ilford County High School.

"I was a dedicated member of the Labour party. But I gradually became disenchanted with it. You could say it was as I developed higher income, but it was more than that."

That disenchantment began when he was introduced to a Labour MP through a friend of his mother. "I forget his name," says Sheppard diplomatically, "but he was a long-serving 1930s-style Labour man and he asked me what I had done. I, with pride, said that I had passed the 11-plus and gone through college. I didn't expect him to give me a vote of thanks but I remember being absolutely shocked when he turned to me and said: 'You have betrayed the working classes. You should never have gone through college. You are the sort of person we want on the shop floor. You could organise strikes, you could disrupt, you've got a lot of the right attitudes.' He left me feeling completely confused."

Although it was not until Margaret Thatcher came to power in 1979 that Sheppard finally switched his allegiance, he further questioned his in-bred political beliefs as a student at the London School of Economics.

"I can remember one of my tutors, a woman, discussing an economics paper I had written and saying: 'Has it not occurred to you at all that at times we should think about the size of the cake as well as how we cut it up?' I can hear her saying that to me now. I had never actually thought about the market. To me it had all been about getting those bastards out of the way and fighting your way through. It wasn't to do with growing the whole economy."

"I was 18 at the time and it made me start to think. I guess it was growing up. I believed in theoretical socialism until the mid-Sixties. I still believe passionately in equality of opportunity. Then, when one lived through the Seventies you saw, long before the East Germans discovered it, that it doesn't work. I have been a Thatcherite supporter for the past eleven-and-a-half years." But he would, he thinks, have made an "appalling" prime minister. Those who know him well question whether he would have been successful as an MP. "He's not really a political man, he is only political about issues," says Sir Brian Wolfson, chairman of Wembley and the National Training Task Force, of which Sheppard is a member. "There is no question that on some issues he would be to the right of centre. On other issues he would veer to the left."

He certainly does not run Grand Metropolitan in a political way. And he denies suggestions it has become a one-man company. Board meetings are, he reveals, often rowdy. He prefers to call them "passionate".

"We have had some very deep debates on some subjects and

some of those debates become quite passionate. Verbally we cut each other to pieces. We rarely sit down and debate anything in an analytical sense."

"I come in and make a statement about what I think should be done. If the other directors were all yes men, they would agree with everything. But they don't. And I certainly do not win all the arguments. If I don't win, I sulk. But the ongoing effect of that is we have no regrets about any of the decisions we have made."

He admits that against that background, GrandMet needs exceptionally strong non-executive directors. "Otherwise the executive directors would run away with the company." Its non-executives include Sir John Harvey-Jones, the former ICI chairman, and Dick Giordano, chairman of BOC Group. And recruits to the executive staff are hand-picked to ensure they are strong enough to stand up to GrandMet's bluff culture.

"We have attracted the same type of person, risk-takers if you want, and on a lot of occasions we have gone out to seek people who we know are rebels."

He is not, he says, a memo sender, preferring to talk things through with people face to face, but the one thing that really irritates him is people who waste his time. "GrandMet people don't spend a lot of time discussing things in great detail. If a person started talking to me about something I think they should have dealt with themselves. I would be bloody rude to them."

But he differentiates between his management style and straight-forward delegation. "People ask if I delegate and I say 'No'. They say: 'Ah, you're an autocrat.' But that isn't what I mean. If you delegate, it implies you know what the other person should be doing and you tell them what to do. I'm not that good. I believe in the individual."

"We have checks and balances in the corporate governing sense, but we don't believe in safety nets for our management. We don't have one-and-a-half people doing each person's job. What one has to do is to have absolutely excellent people and encourage them to take authority to do their own thing. Like a small business. My job is to ride that anarchy, working within a strategic plan, rather like a herd of horses. I have to somehow capture all that movement: that is what management is all about."

Sheppard talks about work incessantly, only occasionally becoming side-tracked into a political debate. His best friend is, he says, his wife, Mary. But he is reluctant to talk about her. They married in 1980, live in an Essex mansion amid 150 acres, have five dogs — four red setters — but no children.

Apart from politics, his lack of children is his other main source of regret. Tellingly, however, he met both Mary and his first wife — "I still see her occasionally, we get on very well" — at work: the latter at Ford during his 18-year stint in the British car industry and Mary at British Leyland.

"I'm a workaholic and not particularly proud of it, but I guess you are what you are," he says. "I'm not a particularly balanced person. I give too much of myself to my own self-enjoyment, which is work. I leave home at 7.30 am

and get back at about 8.30 pm, later if I'm going out. And I take work home with me, about an hour each evening and eight hours over a weekend."

He believes fervently that work should also be fun, and GrandMet's board meetings, as well as being rowdy, are also exceptionally good-humoured. "It's one way of relieving stress," he says. "If I didn't find my job enjoyable, and wasn't able to laugh about it, I would blow up. The danger is that people who do not know me find it difficult because everything appears to be a joke. But it's when I'm laughing most that I'm at my most dangerous."

Wolfson says: "He is a strange quixotic mixture. On the one hand he is very protective of himself and his personal life and yet, at the same time, he is prepared to tell you exactly what he thinks about anything else. He is not a bullshit merchant."

"He is shrewd, belligerent and gutsy. He has an enormous amount of energy, he is full of fun and he loves to create mayhem, shaking everything up to see what arises. He thrives on doing things. He would be an appalling person to have to spend time with doing nothing. You couldn't just lie on a bench, you would have to be out there harpooning something."

Wolfson also points out that it is intriguing that Sheppard used his postgraduate year at LSE to qualify as an accountant and a company secretary. "They are contra-cultural to his nature. An accountant should be someone with whom order is paramount."

But, despite his success, Sheppard is not well organised. He has to have it forced upon him. "I am bad at organising myself," he admits. "I'm better at organising other people."

He is often late for meetings. "But no one ever turns up on time anymore because they all know. I'm not good at getting up and I'm not good at going to bed on time. The whole of my life has been one hour late and I have never managed to catch up. That was one of my problems in the army: I could never manage to be on time."

He was earmarked as a trouble-maker early in his national service. After rupturing himself in basic training, he ended up as a pay clerk in Nottingham and reorganised the office so that a month's allocation of work was completed in three weeks.

"We reorganised all the systems. It was one way of showing insubordination. I was charged with acting insubordinately by addressing an officer through carbon paper. It was one of the improvements we made, to save you from handwriting every envelope. But the colonel dismissed the charge." He hated the army, he says, "because it represented everything about authority I loathed".

His loathing of authority is central to Sheppard's character. It is that that drove him to become his own boss, so that no one would be able to tell him what to do. He can trace it back to his childhood and his father's job as an engine driver for British Rail in Stratford, East London. His brother Pat, to whom he is still close, still works as an engine driver on that same line. His mother was a part-time bank clerk for Barclays in Lombard Street. Money was tight.

"My father at least had job security, but he worked under tremendous physical pressure, doing lots of night work. He found it difficult to sleep during the day and so he was often grumpy. He was not enamoured with British Rail's management and therefore did not like authority in that sense, but he had no choice but to

respond to it for 51 years. I guess some of that rubbed off on me. "I have always hated authority. It's OK to be a rebel if you've got money, you can afford to be one. But if you come from a working class background you hate the system instead."

Concluding that he has "some of my father's stubbornness and some of my mother's ambition", he says that as a child "there were two things I was determined not to be. One was an engine driver and the other a teacher." However, he did once work as a passenger porter at Liverpool Street station in the summer holidays, and as a goods porter at Walthamstow. Ironically, he was until recently a director of British Rail.

"Either I was going to become a communist shop steward and try to overthrow society or I was going to join in. It didn't make me a rebel, it made me coldly determined that I would be back. I would return. As a kid I was a bit of a loner. I preferred the company of adults to children. I must have been a bit of a bore really. I did not like people pushing me around. I was determined to get myself educated because my mother had convinced me that that was the only way to break out."

Despite such militant roots, he now gets on particularly well with the Prince of Wales, whom he meets in his capacity as chairman of the Prince's Youth Business Trust and a vice-president of Business in the Community.

"He is very warm, very friendly and not overwhelmed with self-importance," says Stephen O'Brien, Business in the Community's chief executive. "He's not afraid to make a fool of himself, to have a go, and he doesn't make a virtue out of doing good. It doesn't seem to be an ego trip for him."

In this he is clearly very different to many other industrialists. And when he meets the Prince of Wales he is undaunted. "He does not change at all," says O'Brien. "He is the opposite of sycophantic. He pulls his leg and gets his leg pulled in return."

Sheppard is not ashamed of his roots. He still speaks with a strong London accent and he is certainly warm. He uses words like "passionate" a lot. "I am not cold-blooded," he says. "If I watch a play and it is particularly moving, I won't be sobbing in the aisle, but there will be the odd tear."

Now on a salary of £506,000 a year, he has certainly come a long way. "I am well paid and I have been fortunate. But you do not get fabulously rich doing what I do. It's not the pursuit of money that drives me, nor is it the pursuit of security. It really is the thought of being your own boss."



Militant roots: Sir Allen Sheppard, chairman and chief executive of Grand Metropolitan

## Wrapping up for harsh reality

THE citizens of former East Berlin are preparing to celebrate their last warm Christmas, as a 200 per cent jump in electricity prices in the new year promises to end their sub-tropical heating habits.

Energy was heavily subsidised before reunification this year, with electricity costing just eight pfennigs a kilowatt. In winter, shops, offices and homes were super-heated as an antidote to the piles of grey snow outside.

This should change in January when electricity prices triple to bring them into line with the west. Thermostats may never be turned so high again: good news for visitors who have to endure temperature extremes every time they venture into the city.

As they crawl along the Kudamm, Berlin's motorists are also beginning to see the drawbacks of their city's rapid reunification. Conservative estimates suggest traffic has risen by 50 per cent in the last year as thousands of Trabant owners have headed west in search of consumer durables. The Trabant, the omnipresent East German car, is a noisy, dirty, slow-moving industrial mistake almost tailor-made to cause traffic seizures.

Now the city is blanketed in snow the streets are littered with broken-down Trabants, bringing many important junctions to a standstill. Since East Germans gained the price of a second-hand Trabant has slumped to less than DM500, encouraging owners to abandon them wherever they

## CAPITAL CITY

NEIL BENNETT IN BERLIN



Berlin drawbacks for drivers

break down. Eberhard Freitag, the manager of the Potsdam savings bank, is part of the problem. Until last year he was happy if he could persuade the local mechanic to keep his ageing Trabant on the road. But after currency unification last July, he cashed in his savings for a 5-series BMW. His wife now drives the Trabant into Berlin to shop.

The new roads through Potsdamer Platz, across the site of the Wall, have not alleviated the problem. For years, Berlin's unique situation meant it was spared some of the worst side-effects of the late twentieth cen-

tury. Now it is catching up fast. Further road-building may be hampered by lack of funds, as the federal government is cutting back its annual subsidy of about DM500 million that supported West Berlin during the division.

The Berlin government is relying on public transport to cure the worst of the problems. Many of the subway stations that were closed in 1961 when the Wall was built have been reopened. Earlier this month it was again possible to travel to the Brandenburg Gate.

The traffic situation, however, is likely to grow worse in the new year. When the Wall was first breached in November last year, the city was stormed by thousands of Polish motorists who wanted to shop in the West. The tide was stemmed after German reunification when Polish citizens needed a visa to visit the country. But from January the requirement is being scrapped, leaving Berlin open to another four-wheeled invasion.

Berliners are also nervous about the threatened arrival of the government. Under the terms of reunification, Berlin once more is the German capital, but the government is in Bonn. If it decides to move, more than 200,000 white-collar workers will arrive. Then it will be more than the traffic that seizes up.

The city is also suffering a growing housing problem. Housing in the west was in short supply even before reunification and few are willing to buy, sell or develop property in the east while there are questions over its ownership.

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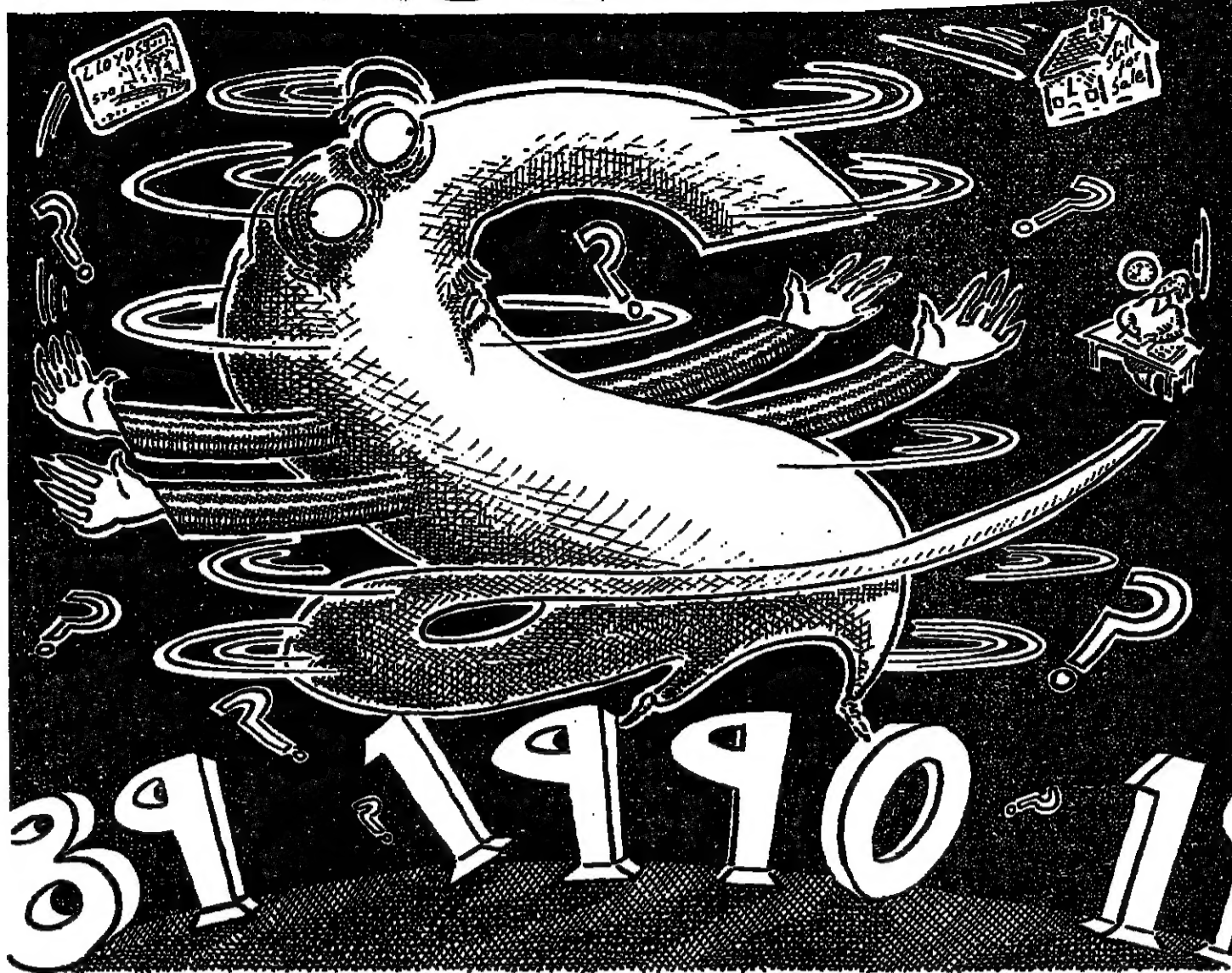
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# The cost of living quiz 1990

NICK MALAND



## SUMMARY Court bans boycott by brokers

SIR Gordon Borrie, the director-general of the Office of Fair Trading, has won an interim injunction in the Restrictive Trade Practices Court preventing brokers from boycotting General Accident, the insurance company, from January 1.

Mr Justice Warner decided the boycott planned by the Institute of Insurance Brokers was not in the public interest. The court has given the Institute until December 31 to withdraw the boycott. Treasury solicitors will write to all 850 members telling them of the ruling.

The brokers are angry that General Accident provided insurance via Ford, the motor company, for 80,000 buyers of new Escorts, Orion and Piestas. The free insurance policies guaranteed a full no-claims bonus at the end of the year for all the drivers.

General Accident accounts for 8 per cent of the motor insurance market. About 1 per cent of its business comes from institute members.

## Stress factor



Sir Allen Shepherd, chairman and chief executive of Grand Metropolitan, was a long serving Labour party member, but does not run his company in a political way despite rowdy board meetings. He tells Carol Leonard that the good humour of these meetings relieves stress. Page 35

## Watchdog alert

Financial watchdogs in London and Brussels have issued a warning against dealing with European Classic Car Investments, a company soliciting funds to invest in classic cars. The British-run firm sends glossy literature to potential investors in the UK claiming annual compound returns of 35 per cent over the last ten years. Page 34

## Tessa time

Companies are busy launching tax exempt special savings accounts (Tessas) in time for the launch on January 1. Nationwide, NatWest, Woolwich, Midland, and Bradford and Bingley have shown their hands. Page 34

## Bonus gloom

There will be no bonus rate bonanza this year as life offices feel the weight of the year's market slump. There could be cuts on shorter term policies and payouts made up largely of terminal bonus rates could also suffer. Page 33

## Bond payout

National Savings is paying out £300,000 to 16,600 holders of premium bond and index linked savings certificates in the next few weeks. Premium bond holders missed out because National Savings put ineligible repaid bonds in draws nine times since 1975. Page 33

## Power stags

The stags have been slow off the mark to sell electricity shares. Allocations were too low for most people to make much profit even with free dealing services. Page 33

## THE SUNDAY TIMES

## Car wars

Carl Hahn of Volkswagen and Gianni Agnelli of Fiat — two car chiefs who could scarcely be more different. Now they are launching an assault on the east European car market that could decide the leadership of the European industry. Business — The Sunday Times tomorrow

The year has been a hard one on the pocket. Within weeks base mortgage rates reached a new peak, sending thousands of home owners into a panic. Then came a plea to savers to think about giving their money to someone or something called Tessa, and the introduction of the first annual charges for credit cards. And as 1990 drew to a close base mortgage rates started to come down again. So many changes, so much confusion. How much attention were you paying? Find out in our special quiz. The answers are on page 34

1. Why did 600,000 holders of Lloyd's Bank Access cards send back their cards in the first few weeks of 1990?

- a) A printing error meant the cards were invalid.
- b) The bank ran a campaign to reduce debt.
- c) Lloyd's became the first major card issuer to levy an annual fee on its credit card of £12.

2. When Barclays introduced an annual charge in June how long did it give people to cancel their card and get their money back?

- a) 56 days: the same as the maximum interest-free period with a Barclaycard when the full bill is paid off each month.
- b) 14 days from the arrival of the notice.
- c) One year, by which time the bank hopes the other main card issuers will have introduced a charge.

3. In June, Weekend Money reported on the case of a dentist who tried to cancel his wife's credit and charge cards. What happened?

- a) She cut up his cards first.
- b) After a four-year battle he was ordered in the High Court to pay an £8,000 bill run up on her American Express card.
- c) A sales assistant confiscated her card when she next went shopping.

4. Why did the Data Protection Registrar serve enforcement notices on the four main credit reference agencies in August?

- a) Because they were refusing to pass on information about people who applied for credit.
- b) Because they were supplying information on other people in the household when a person applied for credit.
- c) The agencies were not supplying information to the registrar.

1. Who or what is Tessa and why is her name linked with John Major?

- a) The new head of National Savings who is to introduce more tax-free products next year.
- b) The former Chancellor's dog who appeared in Budget photographs.
- c) The tax exempt special savings account, which was announced in January 1 by all main savings institutions.

2. What is CRT and why will its abolition cost millions of basic-rate taxpayers money?

- a) Christmas reinder tax will be applied to all parents who give gifts to children this year.
- b) Comparative ratio tax will increase the basic rate tax each year for people who win inflationary pay awards.
- c) Composite rate tax is the tax currently deducted by banks and building societies from all savings at the rate of 22 per cent. When the tax is abolished on April 6 non-taxpayers will be able to earn interest gross but basic rate taxpayers will have 25 per cent deducted from the interest earned on savings.

3. Why did the Halifax write to the parents of 1.25 million children in December?

- a) To ask them to increase their children's pocket money so that youngsters could save more.
- b) To find out what the children wanted for Christmas this year.
- c) To remind parents that most children are non-taxpayers and should be registered as such with building societies and banks so that they can earn interest gross on their savings accounts when CRT is scrapped.

4. The Inland Revenue will start a television advertising campaign in January. What will the adverts be selling?

- a) The pleasure of paying more tax.
- b) The need for non-taxpayers to register for gross payment of interest.
- c) That Inland Revenue snoopers are looking for people who are working and not declaring tax.

## MORTGAGES

1. What was the historically high base mortgage rate set in February?

- a) 15.4 per cent.
- b) 14.5 per cent.
- c) 17 per cent.

2. Why do more than three million home buyers face mortgage payment rises in 1991 despite the November mortgage rate cut?

- a) They are six months or more in arrears with their mortgages.
- b) Their loans are operated under an annual review scheme, which means they did not have their payments increased in the spring and now have to

pay for that shortfall.

c) Their lenders are nervous about interest rate prospects and have decided to increase payments to prevent borrowers falling into debt in the future.

3. What concessions were granted to home buyers in the 1990 Budget?

- a) Stamp duty was scrapped.
- b) A £60,000 threshold was introduced for stamp duty.
- c) None.

## PENSIONS

1. Why might an historic European court ruling lead to women facing longer working lives?

- a) On average women live longer than men so it was ruled that they should retire later to give both sexes the same number of years of drawing a pension.
- b) The court ruled that occupational pension schemes should apply the same retirement benefits to men as they do to women, including retirement age. This is likely to mean more women being required to work to age 65 to earn a full pension.
- c) Women will have to work on until they reach male wage levels to earn a full pension.

2. Why were long-serving employees advised in October not to change jobs until January 1 or after?

- a) Under the Social Security Act they could receive substantially greater pension transfer values if they worked for their present company before 1985.
- b) There is a backlog of job

transfer forms at the Department of Social Security.

c) To make sure they get two pay rises in as many months.

3. How many people have contracted out of the state earnings related pension scheme since April 1988?

- a) Four million.
- b) 500,000 as predicted by the Department Social Security.
- c) All civil servants.

## TAXATION

1. Why might a teacher's perk lead to other workers paying more tax?

- a) The Court of Appeal in November backed the Inland Revenue in a case against Malvern College teachers. It ruled that employees must pay tax on the average cost of benefits.
- b) The Inland Revenue ruled that apples given to teachers by pupils were tips and should be declared for tax.
- c) Employees who have six weeks or more holiday in the summer could face higher National Insurance contributions.

2. What was the single tax allowance in 1989-90 and 90-91?

- a) £5,000 and £6,000.
- b) £1,500 and £2,000.
- c) £2,785 and £3,005.

3. Why were husbands advised to hand over large lump sums to their wives in April?

- a) To prevent the wives being able to claim maintenance if they later divorced.
- b) Where the women were non-taxpayers they could invest the money and earn interest

free of tax under independent taxation rules introduced in April.

c) To show that that chivalry was not dead.

4. Why do some parents pay less tax on their child care since April?

- a) A new tax allowance was introduced for single parents.
- b) Work place nurseries are no longer counted as a perk, which means that employees do not have to pay tax on the difference between what they pay for a place and what it costs their employer.
- c) Nannies became tax deductible for working mothers.

## INVESTMENT

1. How many people applied for shares in the 12 electricity companies?

- a) 12.75 million.
- b) 5.7 million.
- c) 2.5 million.

2. How much of a personal equity plan can be invested in unit trusts?

- a) £3,000.
- b) £6,000.
- c) £2,400.

3. Why can the public expect more unsolicited telephone calls from investment salesmen?

- a) Because times are hard and they are finding it hard to sell their products.
- b) BT is offering cheaper calls to telephone salesmen.
- c) The Securities and Investments Board proposes to allow salesmen to sell investment trust savings schemes and personal equity plans by cold calling next year.



Sorting the Christmas post: Barclaycard now automatically covers parcels lost in the rush

## Plastic has parcels covered

By SARA MCCONNELL

A FEW days' delay in receiving Christmas presents sent through the post is a fact of life at this time of year, but the senders of some parcels bought by credit card will be able to claim on the insurance offered with their plastic if a present fails to arrive.

Barclaycard is expecting a surge in calls after Christmas from customers claiming on the card's Purchase Cover insurance. The deal, introduced in May, provides automatic cover against theft, damage or loss for any item bought with a Barclaycard worth between £50 and £15,000 as long as the card holder returns a claim form within 45 days.

A spokeswoman confirmed that Christmas presents bought with a Barclaycard and put in the post would be covered and that customers would not need to have a registered mail receipt to prove the parcel had been sent. Customers have to produce the sales voucher to prove they bought the present with the card.

"The cover is free and automatic and because this is the first

Christmas we have had the service we are expecting a lot of activity," she said.

American Express's Purchase Protection plan covers items up to £20,000 bought with an American Express card and reported lost, accidentally damaged or stolen within 90 days. But an Amex spokeswoman said card holders claiming for parcels lost in the post must take "due care", which means sending it recorded delivery or registered mail. If parcels are lost, customers should claim on the Post Office's own insurance before claiming from Amex.

She said: "Purchase protection is a safety net and people need to make sure they are not covered elsewhere. Some people may be covered on their contents insurance."

However, householders need to look carefully at the small print on their policies because most will not cover parcels in transit through the mail.

A Prudential spokesman said: "Parcels in the post are not covered by our home contents

policies. We don't cater for that eventuality and we advise people to use registered post."

For a nominal fee people can insure their parcels with Parcelforce, the parcels division of the Royal Mail. Parcelforce will not normally pay out on uninsured parcels but in individual cases will pay between £20 for a 5 kilogram parcel and £45 for a 25 kilogram parcel. If a parcel is valuable it is safer to insure it. Customers buying cover for parcels posted in the UK under the UK Standard Service will pay 45p for compensation of up to £75, 55p for up to £140 compensation, 75p for up to £250 and 95p for up to £400.

Parcelforce says that insured parcels should be securely wrapped and sealed with adhesive tape so that it is obvious if the parcel has been tampered with. Parcels should be labelled in ink and all words spelt out in full. Stick-on address labels should only be used if the parcel is worth less than £200. Anyone claiming on the insurance will have to produce a certificate of posting.

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